

# EXERCISE BOOK

D.G.O.S.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

1952 - 1957  
S W.

**Quinnsworth • CRAZY PRICES**

**LIFESTYLE**  
SPORTS



**VERDI'S** ever-popular "La Traviata" was given by the Dublin Grand Opera Society at the Gaiety Theatre last night with Italian principals and the entire opera sung in Italian. It was a worth-while experiment that turned out satisfactorily. All singing sounds better when the notes are fitted with the original words to which they were written; and the practice of employing two or more languages simultaneously on the operatic stage is open to several obvious objections, not the least being the distracting effect on the singers themselves.

The great success of last night was the Violetta of Luisa Malagrida, whose command of dramatic power had already been shown in "The Force of Destiny." The high-pitched temperament of the heroine was stressed admirably in the acting; the ecstasies of grief in the second act were genuinely touching, and the death scene has rarely been done here with more poignancy. In her upper register the singer occasionally was a trifle uncertain, but otherwise she sang with great purity of tone and easy command of the music.

The Alfred was Rinaldo Pelizzoni, who has a robust tenor voice, but without a great deal of colour. As an actor he was energetic and impulsive—which was, of course, quite in character—and showed himself to have considerable powers of gesture. The traditional operatic heavy father who is old Germont gave way this time to a kindly, rather self-effacing elderly gentleman presented by Giulio Fioravanti. This unexpected characterisation gave quite a new aspect to the opera. "Di Provenza" was not given as a passionate appeal to the emotions, but rather as a proposition to be considered with intellectual detachment. The artist's voice being rather a light and fluent baritone, his interpretation of the part generally was, no doubt, the most suitable one in the circumstances.

Two of the smaller parts were filled by Italian artists, Arturo La Porta (Baron) and Gino Belloni (Doctor), whose fine singing and presence gave them more prominence than usual.

There was some first class work by local players, especially Monica Condrón, who has made Annina her own part; Jean Healy (Flora) and Martin Dempsey (Marquis). The chorus made a bright and graceful picture and sang with confidence and accuracy. Lieut.-Colonel J. M. Doyle conducted, paying conscientious attention, as usual, to the fine points of Verdi's thoughtful, varied and always melodious score.

The production—neat and adroit—was by Powell Lloyd.

It was another "Italian" night at the Gaiety. The principals in the Dublin Grand Opera Society's presentation of "La Traviata" were Italian, and the work was sung throughout in that language.

Luisa Malagrida, who earlier in the week was heard in "The Force of Destiny," was last night the tragic Lady of the Camellias. This central performance was quite remarkable in its sustained intensity of vocal expression.

Signorina Malagrida is an exceptionally fine dramatic soprano with a fresh, ardent voice that is always perfectly placed and produced. Her top notes have strength without a trace of harshness; her soft singing is enchanting.

The Alfred of Rinaldo Pelizzoni was also powerfully sung, but the declamatory voice was rather lacking in finesse.

Alfred's father was played by Giulio Fioravanti, who added many extra little touches to his characterisation to point the distress of a parent. His "Sweet Provence" gave great pleasure.

Arturo la Porta and Gino Belloni were the other Italian artistes, and Brendan Cavanagh, Martin Dempsey, Monica Condrón, Jean Healy and Joe Black, the Irish singers.

The large chorus displayed much verve; the grouping, however, was awkward at times.

Staging was by Powell Lloyd, who made much use of curtains. But the amount of black velvet tended to depress.

The performance was conducted by Lieut.-Col. J. M. Doyle, who secured excellent phrasing, particularly in the two preludes.

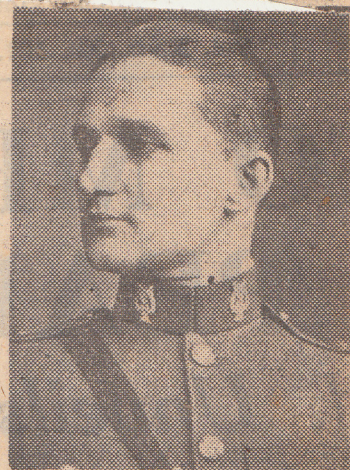
J. J. F.

VERDI has provided a score of great brilliance and ingenuity and Lieut.-Col. J. M. Doyle, who conducted on this occasion, led the orchestra confidently through the sonorousities of the score, the orchestral playing was indeed, in every way, most distinguished. The chording of the bass in that memorable passage in the last act, where the presence of death is so ably depicted, was specially well done.

It has been truly said that there are as many Traviatas as

there are singers who essay the role and the appearance of a new protagonist is always interesting. Luisa Malagrida gave a moving performance as the heroine although her fine voice did not find its full power and expressiveness until the opera was in the second act.

In the first act the quality of the singing in the upper register was unpleasant and made a little uncomfortable by intonation that was sometimes ambiguous, but in the last act she rose to great



LIEUT.-COL. J. M. DOYLE

heights and sang with a true and harrowing sensitivity.

As Alfred, Renaldo Pelizzoni has a good voice but should learn not to force his tone above a busy ensemble. His intonation, unfortunately, is far from being reliable and was something of a handicap throughout the performance.

Giulio Fioravanti gave unusual dignity to the character, Germont pere, a dignity in which understanding and sympathy were perfectly adjusted and his singing was always controlled, and appropriately expressive.

SPECIAL congratulations are due to the chorus master of the Society for having prepared the large chorus for such a brilliant performance, even in the climaxes the quality was maintained; it must have been indeed difficult for them to change from the accustomed English translation to the Italian.



# GAIETY THEATRE

Nightly 7.30. Matinee Sat. 2.30

DUBLIN GRAND OPERA SOCIETY

in association with Radio Eireann

TO-NIGHT, Thurs. and Sat.

## LA TRAVIATA

with Luisa Malagrida

Rinaldo Pellizoni Giulio Fioravanti

Conductor: Lieut.-Col. J. M. Doyle

Tues. and Friday—Manon.

Wed. Evg. & Sat. Mat.—La Boheme

The Italian singers won further laurels last night in the Gaiety Theatre, Dublin, when they delighted a full house with a sparkling performance in "La Traviata."

Chief honours, quite properly, went to Luisa Malagrida, who gave a moving, character study of Violetta, the luckless Lady of the Camellias. In her singing she ran the full emotional gamut. Her acting in the last scene was impelling in its dramatic fervour, and she

richly deserved the applause it evoked.

Rinaldo Pelizzoni, who was the Alfred, was not quite so successful. He has a fine ringing tenor voice and plenty of it, but last night was too prone to sharpen, with the result that his audience felt on edge, too.

A delightful contrast was the playing of Giulio Fioravanti in the rôle of the father, Germont. He departed from the old-style blustering type, and, instead, his audience saw a benevolent old provincial stirred to indignation at finding his son entangled with a courtesan. There was some very beautiful singing, supported by polished acting and stage-work. Excellent touches were also provided by Arturo La Porta, as the Baron, and Gino Belloni, as the Doctor.

Of the local singers, Martin Dempsey must have pleased every one with the big advance he has made. His work as the Marquess d'Orbigny was splendid. Monica Condron, as Annina; Jean Healy, as Flora, and Brendan Cavanagh, as the Viscount, also stood well up to their parts.

A special word of commendation must go to the chorus, not alone for its excellent singing, but for the facile way in which the members sang the Italian words.

The staging and setting were admirably arranged, and one admired the clever manner in which the producer, Powell Lloyd, built his sets to project the sound.

Lt.-Col. J. M. Doyle conducted,

## Good Choral Work In "La Traviata"

By JOSEPH O'NEILL

"Irish Independent" Music Critic

VERDI'S "La Traviata" was the third presentation of the Dublin Operatic Society in its season at the Gaiety Theatre, with Radio Eireann Symphony Orchestra, and the Society's musical director, Lieut.-Col. J. M. Doyle, conducting.

The chorus of the Society has sung this opera many times; but on this occasion they sang it in Italian, so as to conform to the Italian script sung by the visiting principals.

It must have been difficult for them to change from a well-known English translation to the Italian; but their earnestness as chorists was shown by their confident, and accurate, singing throughout the performance.

Luisa Malagrida gave an excellent characterisation of Violetta. The special beauty of her voice lies in its middle register in mezza-voce singing; and the employment of this quality in her second act scene with Georges Germont, and also in Act 4, gave particular pleasure.

Her splendid acting, her movements and general timing, marked her out as an unusual artist. In the great singing demanded in the

first act she did not completely satisfy, as the musical quality of her voice in the very high register did not match her middle voice.

The tenor principal, Alfred, was Renaldo Pelizzoni. He sang with most uncertain intonation, and with little variety of tone colour.

### NEW CHARACTERISATION

To the part of the father, Georges Germont, quite a new characterisation was given by Giulio Fioravanti. He was a benign, quiet figure, singing in a light, pleasing baritone-tenor voice which had effective resonance.

There was considerable tenderness and feeling in his scene with Violetta after her capitulation; but one wondered why she had given way to his gently expressed wishes.

Arturo La Porta, as Baron Duphol, and Gino Belloni as the Doctor, added importance to the smaller parts. Jean Healy and Monica Condron, Martin Dempsey and Brendan Cavanagh, did good work in the general picture.

Lieut.-Col. Doyle exercised a capable control, and obtained very satisfying effects from the orchestra. The string playing to the opening of Act 4 was particularly good.



# GAIETY THEATRE

Nightly 7.30. Matinee Sat. 2.30  
DUBLIN GRAND OPERA  
SOCIETY

TO-NIGHT and FRIDAY

## MANON

Barbara Britton Betty Sagon  
Ernest Davies Richard Lewis  
Otakar Kraus Jess Walters

Conductor: Reginald Goodall

Wednesday Evg. & Saturday Mat.  
LA BOHEME

Thurs. & Sat. LA TRAVIATA

★ CONTINUING their season at the Gaiety, the Dublin Grand Opera Society turned to France last night and produced Massenet's "Manon," which is based on the story by Abbe Prevost.

Groomed to suit the purposes of the composer, the plot is rather unreal even by grand opera standards. There are too many sudden leaps from one dramatic situation to another, without any effective bridges between them.

The opera contains some well-known arias and a few fine quartets, but the score is, in the main, rather frail, and lacks the depth and emotion which would be needed fully to carry the story.

The singing and acting were on a high plane. In the title role Barbara Britton was an accomplished actress. Her voice is somewhat small, but is pure in intonation, and she has the pleasing quality of perfect diction. She was artistically most satisfying in the second act.

As Chevalier des Grieux, Richard Lewis was suitably noble in appearance and sang with grace. Otakar Kraus took the part of Manon's soldier cousin. An artiste

with considerable gifts, he gave a most noteworthy interpretation.

Jess Walters made a late but memorable contribution to the evening's proceedings.

The chorus was disjointed and too attached to the conductor's baton.

The sets were not by any means a delight to the eye. A fashionable gambling house looked more like a converted prison cell, while the Chevalier's apartment was rather drab. A carpet which has made many an operatic appearance was again, and surely once too often, pressed into service.

The orchestra, led by Zola Cirulli, conducted by Reginald Goodall, kept matters moving at good pace.

B. Q.

Jules Massenet's lyric drama "Manon" was the fourth opera presented by the Dublin Grand Opera Society at the Gaiety Theatre, with the Radio Eireann Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Reginald Goodall and led by Zola Cirulli.

In the name part, Barbara Britton was a charming Manon. Her voice is of rather too light texture, however, and she has not sufficient control of her high register, but her acting and the sincerity of her portrayal carried her through successfully.

Richard Lewis as Chevalier des Grieux was excellent, singing and acting superbly throughout. His singing of the aria in Act 2 was a rare treat of effortless vocal technique. Otakar Kraus and Ernest Davies were Lescaut and De Bretigny, respectively, both giving highly satisfactory performances.

Jess Walters was outstanding as the Count des Grieux, possessing a voice of great power and resonance and his commanding presence admirably suited the part.

As three soubrettes, Clothilde Johnston, Monica Condon and Betty Sagon acquitted themselves well, and small parts were nicely filled by Joseph Flood, Brendan Cavanagh, Gus Madden and Maura Mooney.

Production was by Powell Lloyd and the settings throughout were excellent, that for Act 2 being particularly pretty. The chorus was heard to best advantage in the off-stage chorus in Scene 2, Act 3, and the ladies were very pleasing at the beginning of the same scene, but the contralto line is more successful than the soprano.

The orchestra played extremely well throughout. Great credit is due to Reginald Goodall for his grand reading of the score.

R. K.

The revival by the Dublin Grand Opera Society of Massenet's "Manon" attracted a big audience to the Gaiety Theatre, Dublin, last night. In its presentation the honours went to the men. Richard Lewis sang the rôle of the Chevalier des Grieux with full appreciation. He was applauded particularly for the arias "Closing the eyes" and "Begone, fair vision." Otakar Kraus as Lescaut, Ernest Davies as the wealthy De Bretigny, and Jess Walters as the Count des Grieux, were an impressive trio, giving their rôles with conviction. Joseph Flood, as the Minister for Finance, gave a creditable performance.

In the title part, Barbara Britton did excellently in the opening scene as the college girl. The chorus did admirably, and staging and dressing were first class. Reginald Goodall conducted.



THE revival of Massenet's melodious and dramatically effective "Manon" at the Gaiety last night by the Dublin Grand Opera Society was enjoyed by a large audience.

The score is one of the most fluent and graceful in the range of French opera, with many colour contrasts and appropriate musical comment on the action passing on the stage, and the three leading parts give unusual opportunities for personal interpretations by the artists. The title role was played by a young soprano, who had not been heard here before, Barbara Britton. Her voice, very pleasing indeed in the middle register, has not sufficient volume nor power of emotional expression to convey adequately the complex, reckless character of Manon, lovable and detestable at the same time and endowed with prodigious powers of persuasion. As an actress, she made a good impression in the opening scene; but in her actions she displayed an unfortunate tendency to beat time to the music, producing a mechanical effect.

#### FAMOUS ARIA

In Richard Lewis we had a des Grieux who looked, acted and sang the part with conviction from beginning to end, giving us all the full-blooded and changing emotions in vivid detail. His eloquent tenor voice rendered the music beautifully, especially when the surges of passion were called for. The famous aria, "Begone, sweet image," in which he seeks the path of renunciation, was sung with great artistry, bringing to realisation the soul-tearing struggle within the man.

Another first class portrayal came from that fine operatic artist, Otakar Kraus, who played Lescaut, the self-seeking man of the world. A fine stage presence and commanding voice brought the character very much to life. In the part of the Count, Jess Walters exhibited a heavy bass and a heavy black costume that went well with the part of the heavy father.

#### SMALLER PARTS

The many small parts were filled in very satisfactorily. Ernest Davies and Joseph Flood were in fine vocal and dramatic form as the two men of pleasure, Bretigny and Guillot, and the three frivolous ladies were well presented by Clothilde Johnston, Monica Condron and Betty Sagon.

The production and staging (by Powell Lloyd) were excellent, the chorus knew its work well and even made its words heard, and the orchestra (conductor, Reginald Goodall) rendered the charming score with care and effect.

## Successful 'Manon' at The Gaiety

"Manon," as presented by the Dublin Grand Opera Society in the Gaiety Theatre last night, has proved itself to be Massenet's most popular work. It reveals all the qualities and limitations of his style, its melodies are agreeable and very singable, but border on the sentimentally commonplace; the orchestration is varied and effective, but lacking in character and originality.

The famous dream song and many other arias are melodious, delicate and of great charm—with many other passages of passionate intensity.

From every point of view, Powell Lloyd's production is on a very high artistic level, apart from a miscast of the leading role—the beautiful young heroine of Abbe Prevost's story that has long been an attraction to the most famous prime-donna. Although Barbara Britton appeared to be completely within the part histrionically, her voice is not equal to doing full justice to Massenet's demands. This was a great pity, as the other principals, Richard Lewis, Jess Walters, Otakar Kraus and Ernest Davies could not have been surpassed. Richard Lewis gave a brilliant performance, rich in experience and expressively sung. The supporting cast: Betty Sagon, Clothilde Johnston, Monica Condron and Joseph Flood, are all well suited to their respective parts. The chorus sang with animation, and the orchestral playing was responsive and finely balanced. Reginald Goodall conducted.

R. J.



★ Opera audiences in Dublin are now setting an example to the rest of Europe (Covent Garden and La Scala not excepted).

Not a single handclap broke the continuity of last evening's performance by the Dublin Grand Opera Society of "Madame Butterfly" at the Gaiety—although there could be found good excuse for untimely applause.

Not even at the end of a splendidly sung "One Fine Day" were hands brought together. Approval was held back until the end of each act.

The tale, incidentally, was the same last week with "La Bohème." The inconsiderate bad old days when too-enthusiastic opera-lovers demanded sometimes two encores of particular arias from the unfortunate singers before being satisfied are happily over.

Last night's applause, when it did come, was solid and long, as might be expected with Joan Hammond in the title rôle of the unhappy Japanese bride. The massive, well-placed voice, the sincerity of expression, the faultless phrasing of the Puccini arias—these qualities in this singer are already celebrated. They were present again last evening and gave considerable pleasure.



Betty Sagon's Suzuki was a beautifully-modulated performance; her fine acting sharpened the drama. Bruce Dargaval, with his great range, sounded depths in the American Consul's rôle very rarely heard; so much so that the part took on a new significance. Joseph Flood as Goro had in song the clarity of a B.B.C. news reader.

The tenor was Ivan Cecchini, an Italian artist. The voice was lacking in depth, and gave the impression of being overworked of late. The phrasing was frequently too jerky for Puccini's music—perhaps the fact that the rôle was being sung in English may be responsible. A hardness in attack was also noticeable at times in the performance.

Sam Mooney, Martin Dempsey, and Maureen Ryan played subsidiary rôles.

The settings were the same as those used in recent performances

of the opera. I wish the Gaiety folk would iron out the unsightly wrinkles and bulges in the backcloth representing the Nagasaki landscape.

Vilem Tausky conducted the performance. He secured good definition and excellent tempo without upsetting the rhythm. The purely orchestral passages in particular had much beauty. Production by H. Powell Lloyd.

J. J. F.

## JOAN HAMMOND EXCELS IN 'MADAM BUTTERFLY'

The presentation of Giacomo Puccini's ever-popular "Madame Butterfly" by the Dublin Grand Opera Society at the Gaiety Theatre, was a most satisfying one and attracted a large audience. The highlight of the production was Miss Joan Hammond in the name part, and she richly deserved the enthusiastic reception given to her for her superb performance. Vocally and histrionically her performance was one of outstanding beauty and appeal.

Playing opposite to Joan Hammond in the part of Pinkerton, Ivan Cecchini was not quite so satisfying vocally as his voice is not capable of a great variety of tone-colour. However, he rose quite well to the musical demands of Puccini's score, and a special word of thanks is due to him for singing the text in English.

"Madame Butterfly" is a principals' opera, but the chorus was good in the little they had to do.

Betty Sagon gave her usually competent reading of the part of Butterfly's faithful servant, Suzuki, and Bruce Dargaval was an admirable Sharpless. The part of Goro and The Bonze were very well taken by Joseph Flood and Sam Mooney, respectively. Other parts were filled by Maureen Ryan, Martin Dempsey, Gus Madden and Leo Donnelly.

The orchestra, conducted by Vilem Tausky, played very well throughout, but rather too heavily during Act 1 for proper balance with the stage. The production was by Powell Lloyd and the leader of the orchestra was Zola Cirulli.

R. K.

## DUBLIN GREET'S JOAN HAMMOND

A brilliant performance by Joan Hammond in the title rôle was the outstanding feature of the Dublin Grand Opera Society's production of "Madame Butterfly" at the Gaiety Theatre, Dublin, last night. Looking back over the years, one could not visualise a finer Cho-Cho-San since that other great singer from "down under," Rosina Buckman, held sway. Miss Hammond has virtually everything that the part of the Japanese singing girl requires. One readily forgets all about size and age—and how cleverly she got over that difficult question by a whisper into the ear of the Consul. In her artistry, Miss Hammond imparted to her singing in the earlier scene a lightness and simplicity of tone that admirably reflected the youth of the character. Then came the outburst with all the splendid richness of voice, of the glorious music of the wedding duet. It was in the second act, however, that she expressed the pathos of the deserted wife still living in hopes, the shock of learning of Pinkerton's marriage in America, and the despair driving her to suicide. All the feelings were exquisitely drawn in the varying tones of the voice, and it was little wonder that at the final curtain she received a great ovation. As Lieut. Pinkerton, Ivan Cecchini stood well up to a thankless job. His opening scene with the Consul was well sung, although he had a tendency to be too syllable in his words, no doubt due to singing in English—to him a foreign language. He responded admirably to the demands of the duet at the close of the first act. Bruce Dargaval did grandly as the Consul. A fine stage presence and great resonance of voice carried the part admirably. Completing a splendid quartet was Betty Sagon as the indispensable Suzuki. Joseph Flood, as usual, played the part of the marriage broker capably, and Sam Mooney and Martin Dempsey also had good parts. Vilem Tausky was the conductor.



# SINGER'S MASTERY

## 'Madame Butterfly' At Gaiety

A curious feature of Puccini's "Madam Butterfly" is that there is only one full-scale part in it—that of the unfortunate (some would say stubborn) young lady herself. She is on the stage for virtually the entire length of the opera and when she is not she is being awaited.

It may not be always recognised how heavy is the burden on the soprano in this work. It stands or falls by her. If she is good all is well; if not, it is in vain that the tenor, baritone, and mezzo act and sing brilliantly.

To say that Joan Hammond's performance carried the production at the Gaiety last night by the Dublin Grand Opera Society is not then, to do a disservice to the other members of the cast; it was due to the construction of the opera as much as to Miss Hammond's exquisite singing and sympathetic acting of this immortal role.

Her voice was at all times perfectly modulated to the mood of the moment; volume and colour were judged with great artistry. The fact that the audience failed to break out into the accustomed applause after the celebrated aria in the second act was a tribute to the singer's mastery of the part. The audience was genuinely moved.

Betty Sagon, whom we saw as Suzuki last season, again appeared in the part and gave great help to her principal, singing with ease and clarity and putting many homely natural touches into her acting.

The part of Pinkerton was taken by an Italian tenor, Ivan Cecchini. He did manage to convey the restless, irresponsible nature of the man in the first act and sang vigorously.

He was handicapped, however, by an imperfect pronunciation of the English words and gave the impression of stabbing at the notes with the result that the melodic line was faulty. Possibly he would have done better had he sung in Italian. As we are well accustomed to polygot opera performances after the long training afforded audiences by the Society, certainly no harm would have been done.

The consul, Sharpless, was played by that fine artist, Bruce Darvagal, who admirably conveyed the kindly nature of the man and his confusion and shame at the behaviour of the careless man of the world personified in the lieutenant.

As usual, the small parts in this opera were excellently played by local artists—Joseph Flood (the ideal Goro), Martin Dempsey (a dignified Yamadori), Sam Mooney (the indignant Bonze), Maureen Ryan (embarrassed Kate Pinkerton), Gus Madden (Imperial Commissioner), and Leo Donnelly (Registrar).

The conductor, Vilem Tansky, produced many beautiful tone pictures from the limpid and always interesting score and the production by Powell Lloyd, on traditional lines, was smooth and orderly.

★ LAST NIGHT'S "RIGOLETTO," presented by the Dublin Grand Opera Society at the Gaiety Theatre, was one of the most unusual I have ever seen. From the point of view of singing it was one of the most uneven, and as far as production was concerned it moved at a cracking pace.

In other words, while I derived great satisfaction and pleasure from some parts, others left me with a feeling of frustration.

With Italian artistes in the leading roles I expected a full-blooded version of Verdi, but there were times when the voices were not on a par with the acting.

Giuseppe Zampieri filled the role of the Duke, but he gave the impression of nurturing carefully his rather light tenor voice, which, with increased volume, seemed to lose texture.

★

Undoubtedly the quality was pleasing, but the ringing notes one expects from the dashing and rascally nobleman were few and far between. Sandra Baruffi was a pleasing Gilda, though her "Caro Nome" was somewhat mechanical and there was a slightly metallic quality about her top notes. Her best singing was in the final scene.

On the other hand, the Rigoletto of Otello Bersellini was a remarkable achievement. He ignored, for the most part, the traditional limp, and the subtleties

of "make-up" enabled the facial expressions to be accentuated. He has a voice with great resources—ringing and clear.

His performance in the third act was nothing less than startling. In our eyes his expression of grief was exaggerated, but his rage and vows of vengeance, when he faced the audience was thrilling. The voice had the volume to match the intense acting.

★

Arturo la Porta was a dignified Monterone, and Betty Sagon an intriguing Maddelene, who sang clearly. Gino Belloni used his rich bass well as Sparafucile. Other parts were filled by Joseph Flood (a scheming Marullo), Brendan Cavanagh, Jean Healy, Anne Bishop, Maura Mooney and Noel Reid.

Generally the chorus sang well, though there were times when a sharper attack would have been appreciated.

Lieut.-Col. J. M. Doyle did a fine job as conductor, despite the tendency at times of the singers to slow down the tempo. He kept a good balance and achieved a nice tone.

H. Powell Lloyd was the producer.

Incidentally, the opera was sung throughout in Italian, again quite an achievement for the local artistes and chorus, who have had so much work to do this season.

The Dublin Grand Opera Society's presentation of "Rigoletto" at the Gaiety Theatre, Dublin, last night, was notable for the brilliance of Otello Bersellini in the title rôle. It is questionable if ever a Dublin audience has witnessed such a vividly dramatic picture of the part of the Jester as that given last night by this talented Italian baritone. His Jester was of the old-fashioned melodrama school, sung and acted with a flourish. The climax of his performance came not in the final act, but in the closing minutes of the third, where, in the duet with his daughter, he swept on to a thrilling finish. The build-up here was simply terrific, and for this conductor Lieut.-Col. J. M. Doyle deserves high marks.

Sandra Baruffi, as Gilda, sang the rôle simply, yet extremely well. Much the same thing might be said of Giuseppe Zampieri as the Duke of Mantua.

In the smaller supporting rôles there were good studies by Betty Sagon (Maddalena), Gino Belloni (Sparafucile), Arturo la Porta (Monterone), Joseph Flood, Brendan Cavanagh and Anne Bishop.



THE Dublin Grand Opera Society gave an excellent presentation of Verdi's "Rigoletto," with the Radio Eireann Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Lieut-Colonel J. M. Doyle, and led by Renzo Marchionni, at the Gaiety Theatre.

There was some very fine singing from the chorus in Act I, and the men's chorus at the conclusion of Act 2 was a perfect example of resonant soft singing. Their achievement in singing the text in Italian was further enhanced by the expressiveness of their performance throughout. A particular instance was the chorus with Rigoletto in Act 3.

As Gilda, Sandra Baruffi looked and acted very well, but occasional lapses of intonation took from her singing. This could be attributed to the fact that her breathing is too high. Her distressing habit of clearing her throat audibly rather spoiled the lovely Caro Nome aria to the technical demands of which she was not altogether equal. Her most beautiful singing was in the closing death scene.

Giuseppe Zampieri was a rather restrained Duke of Mantua. He possesses a nice quality tenor voice, not outstanding, but warm and very well controlled. The highlight of his performance was his singing of *La donna e mobile*.

#### MEMORABLE SINGING

The honours undoubtedly went to Otello Bersellini as the ill-fated jester, Rigoletto, whose glorious singing and acting made his performance a very memorable one.

Other excellent portrayals were given by Gino Belloni, Betty Sagon and Arturo La Porta and small parts were nicely filled by Ralph Morris.

Joseph Flood, Brendan Cavanagh, Anne Bishop and Maura Mooney.

Production, which was by Powell Lloyd, left nothing to be desired. The costumes and settings were pleasing and there was a welcome difference about the setting of Act 4.

Highest credit was due to the conductor (and musical director), Lieut-Col. Doyle, for his command of orchestra and stage, and for maintaining perfect balance always.

R. K.

## An Exciting 'Rigoletto'

THE emphasis was decidedly upon the music, both vocal and orchestral, in the performance of "Rigoletto" in the Gaiety Theatre on Thursday night, the sixth production by the Dublin Grand Opera Society, as the conductor, Lt.-Col. J. M. Doyle (the Society's Musical Director), drew from Radio Eireann Symphony Orchestra exciting support for the blood and thunder on the stage.

Verdi's colourful score found new life in this production, in which Otello Bersellini, as Rigoletto, was outstanding in his dramatic intensity.

But Giuseppe Zampieri, although he has a pleasant musical voice, has not as yet achieved the easy manner of the Duke, and Sandra Baruffi's singing hardly encompassed the whole range of Gilda's vocal experiences.

The rest of the cast had good voices. Betty Sagon as Maddelene brought much temperament to her interpretation, and Gino Belloni did full justice to Sparafucile. Arturo La Porta was vocally superb as Monterone. Powell Lloyd's production and designs were admirable.

R.J.

VERDI'S "Rigoletto," the third opera to be presented at the Gaiety Theatre by Dublin Grand Opera Society in association with the Radio Eireann Symphony Orchestra, was given last night entirely in Italian.

The production by Powell Lloyd was on broad conventional lines with individual touches of stage presentation and design. Otello Bersellini played the title role in magnificent style. His interpretation suggested both ironic comedy and intense tragedy, and his acting was faultless. The rich baritone voice has a wonderful range of colour and very attractive quality.

#### A LIVELY DUKE.

Giuseppe Zampieri gave a sufficiently lively and accurate reading of the part of the Duke. His sweet tenor was heard to best effect in the solo and duet work; it seemed to lack the necessary volume in the ensemble pieces.

Sandra Baruffi, who gave a vivacious interpretation of Musetta in "La Bohème," took the part of the ill-fated Gilda. Her singing was, on the whole, dramatically restrained.

In the upper register her notes are thin, but nevertheless pure without the slightest trace of smugness.

Arturo La Porta was a commanding Count Monterone, and delivered his "curse" in the first act in fine melodramatic style. Gino Belloni presented Sparafucile with distinction, while Betty Sagon as his sister, carried her part with ease, both vocally and dramatically.

Smaller parts were competently discharged by Ralph Morris, Brendan Cavanagh, Joseph Flood, Jean Healy and Anne Bishop.

Lieut.-Col. J. M. Doyle's orchestral balance and appreciation of the dramatic climaxes produced some of the memorable moments of the performance. The chorus carried itself through the Italian text with credit, and performed particularly well in the third act.



# GAITY THEATRE

Nightly 7.30. Mat. Sat., 2.30

DUBLIN GRAND OPERA SOCIETY

To-night, Friday and Saturday

## DON PASQUALE

Veronica Dunne Ivan Cecchini  
Bruce Dargaval - Ronald Stear

Tues. and Thurs.—

MADAME BUTTERFLY

Wed. Evg. and Sat. Matinee—  
RIGOLETTO

## “DON PASQUALE”

“Don Pasquale,” Donizetti's comic opera, was given with great success in the Gaiety Theatre, Dublin, last night, where the Dublin Grand Opera Society continued its season. “Don Pasquale” shares the distinction, with the same composer's “L'elisir d'amore” and Rossini's “The Barber of Seville,” of being virtually the only Italian comic operas of their period that have maintained a popular appeal. In the case of “Don Pasquale” this is easily understood, as the work contains not only delightful music, but a great vein of comedy.

In the English version by Professor E. J. Dent, which was submitted last night, the dialogue was cleverly pointed, and in the acting there was care to see that the comedy never got out of bounds. Ronald Stear, who played Pasquale, was magnificent, singing with rich voice and acting with that easy artistry which made everything he did seem natural. Bruce Dargaval showed his versatility with the suave manner in which he played the rôle of Dr. Malatesta.

Ivan Cecchini caught a lot of the character of nephew Ernesto, though his acting was a little stiff, and at times his voice was not coming through as one would like. He might have made more of the lovely “Com'e Gentil” serenade.

Veronica Dunne scored a great success as Norina. It is a delightful part, and her voice responded beautifully to the melodic line. Her acting had all the playfulness and guile that the character demanded.

Vilem Tausky was the conductor.

## ‘Don Pasquale’ Hailed An Operatic Treat

THE revival of Donizetti's sparkling comic opera, “Don Pasquale,” by the Dublin Grand Opera Society at the Gaiety on Saturday afternoon, provided a great treat—in spite of the sultry weather—for a goodly and appreciative audience. The theme is a conventional one of the old Italian opera—the elderly gentleman trying to assume the spirits and sentiments of love's young dream and being thoroughly fooled for his pains. The trick that is played upon poor old Don Pasquale would in real life be brutal and wicked and, probably, a criminal offence into the bargain; but on the stage it can pass for relatively innocent fun.

### EXCELLENT CAST

The four principals made an excellent team. The title rôle was played by a distinguished artist, a master of operatic comedy, who was last seen in Dublin seven or eight years ago when he gave us a memorable Leporello—Ronald Stear. Gifted with a fine resonant voice and great clarity of diction, allied to an impressive stage presence and a keen sense of the fun in the part, he made the foolish old fellow spring to life vividly. The hero, Ernesto, is a typical tenor of old Italian opera, mostly made up of vocal show and attitudes and conforming to a simple recipe of a young and lively man practically dying in love. Ivan Cecchini, who sang his solo passages in Italian (while the rest sang in English throughout), acted the part vigorously, with a wealth of gesture. His voice has some fine full notes, but is not well controlled.

### VERONICA DUNNE

The Irish girl, Veronica Dunne, who made such a favourable impression in “La Bohème,” showed in her portrait of Norina that she can assume the gay robe of extravagant comedy with as much ease and effect as she wears that of pathos and tragedy. It was a brilliant performance of its kind; the voice travelling smoothly through the music and never making a mistake and the acting bringing out the natural vivacity of the character to the full. The part of the genial Malatesta fitted Bruce Dargaval like a glove. He was in excellent voice and he, too, must be congratulated for his diction. The cast was completed by Barry O'Sullivan, who brought some comic touches to the tiny part of the Notary. The chorus has not a great deal to sing, but did well when it got a chance and was very well dressed.

Vilem Tausky brought orchestra and singers through the consistently melodious and attractive score without any sort of hitch and the production by Powell Lloyd was first-rate.

## An Interesting “Don Pasquale”

★ A vivacious performance of Donizetti's “Don Pasquale” was presented at the Gaiety Theatre by the Dublin Grand Opera Society on Saturday.

The story of the romantic old gentleman who is fooled by two lovers is not unknown in opera, but here the plot is carried out neatly. Producer Powell Lloyd and the cast were careful to keep away from buffoonery, but the rich humour was emphasised by subtle touches.



An interesting point was that the principals were all appearing in their parts for the first time. They not only filled them with distinction, but united excellently.

Ronald Stear was Pasquale, and he sang the rippling music in masterly fashion, acted neatly, and gave a lesson in good diction. Every word was clear—an essential feature of this type of opera. Veronica Dunne found the part of Norina to her liking, sang easily with fine tone, and showed a real appreciation of the humorous interludes. The scheming Malatesta was played by Bruce Dargaval with skill and polish, and his resonant baritone sounded well. Ivan Cecchini was Ernesto. His English pronunciation was very good and he sang well, though at times a trace of hardness crept into the voice.

The chorus had not much to do, but were efficient. Vilem Tausky conducted, and maintained a merry pace.

N.



"I notice there are no concerts in the gallery during the intervals. It's a pity, as I dislike to see these old traditions passing away."

Ronald Stear, the celebrated bass, who has been specially engaged to fill the title role in the Dublin Grand Opera Company's presentation of "Don Pasquale," at the Gaiety to-morrow, was



referring to the "good old days," when, between the acts of an opera, members of the audience tried to match their skill with that of the artistes.

"I remember," said Mr. Stear, "when playing Devilshoof in 'The Bohemian Girl,' a very good bass sang 'Drinking.' When the curtain went up I had to follow him. Believe me, I put everything I had into that song."

Mr. Stear, who was born in Malta, has sung leading parts in Covent Garden and all the big musical festivals in Britain, having filled no less than sixty roles. One of his favourites is the Czar in Boris Goudonov, an opera which he thinks is too neglected.

He came to Dublin, first with the Carl Rosa Company, and, after a number of subsequent visits, is glad to be here again.

DONIZETTI'S masterpiece, "Don Pasquale," which is almost unrivalled in its own genre, was revived by the Dublin Grand Opera Society at the Gaiety Theatre last Saturday afternoon.

It is not surprising that the work continues to hold the stage, for the vitality of the music is boundless and the vocal writing consummate.

The music, in fact of the whole work as said before, is like champagne bubbling and scintillating with wit and merriment. Nobody is very sad, and with so much gaiety about it is not possible to take any of the deeper moments very seriously.

Powell Lloyd's brilliant production with Professor Dent's English version and musical direction by Vilem Tausky, served the composer well and delighted a representative matinee audience.

## "DON PASQUALE" AT GAIETY

Gaetano Donizetti's "Don Pasquale," an opera buffa, was first presented at the Metropolitan in January, 1900, with Sembrich playing the part of Norina.

Produced by Powell Lloyd and conducted by Vilem Tausky, the Dublin Grand Opera Society presented this opera at the Gaiety Theatre with a cast of outstandingly fine principals. In the part of Ernesto, Don Pasquale's nephew, Ivan Cecchini sang his arias in Italian and the dialogue sections in English, for which a word of praise is due to him.

Veronica Dunne as Norina and Bruce Dargavel as Doctor Malatesta sang very well and extracted the utmost fun from their parts, whilst Ronald Stear as the crusty old bachelor, Don Pasquale, gave an incomparable performance. There was a grand style about his characterisation and his diction left nothing to be desired.

Barry O'Sullivan made a good notary, and the chorus was good in its small part.

Costumes, settings and lighting were good, and Vilem Tausky gave a fine reading of the score. The leader of the orchestra was Zola Cirulli.

R. K.

The general standard of singing was very high indeed. Of the principals, Veronica Dunne gave special distinction to the performance in the role of Norina, and her accomplished singing and keen sense of comedy was a constant delight and could scarcely have been improved upon.

Bruce Dargavel's Dr. Malatesta was the acme of polished perfection, singing and acting superbly; one must congratulate this fine artist for his amazing versatility in the many difficult roles he has undertaken.

Ivan Cecchini, fresh from the role of Pinkerton, made a personable Ernesto, but his pleasant tenor voice was "throaty" at times, and he seemed to indulge too readily in the semi-sob beloved of stage tenors; his acting also was not quite convincing.

Ronald Stear's Pasquale was a brilliant piece of work in all respects. His performance combined excellent singing and an ability to extract the utmost humour from the part without a trace of over-acting.

The duets and ensembles were admirable, as was also the chorus of servants in Act 3. Vilem Tausky's fine direction as always, inspires confidence both from stage and orchestra, and there can be no doubt that he will ever secure the maximum of effectiveness in this week's performances.



FESTIVAL OF  
**GRAND OPERA**  
AT THE OPERA HOUSE, CORK  
SEPTEMBER 1ST-6TH, 1952

NIGHTLY 8 P.M.  
A. A. HEALY

PRESENTS

**DUBLIN GRAND OPERA SOCIETY**

IN ASSOCIATION WITH

**RADIO EIREANN**

RADIO EIREANN LIGHT ORCHESTRA  
(LEADER - JACK CHEATLE)

AND

**FAMOUS GUEST ARTISTS**

From Covent Garden, Carl Rosa & Sadlers Wells

VICTORIA ELLIOTT  
RUTH PACKER

VERONICA DUNNE  
EDITH COATES

Monday, Sept. 1st.....IL TROVATORE

Tuesday, Sept. 2nd.....FAUST

Wednesday, Sept. 3rd.....IL TROVATORE

Thursday, Sept. 4th.....FAUST

Friday, Sept. 5th.....LA TRAVIATA

Saturday, Sept. 6th (matinee).....FAUST

Saturday, Sept. 6th (night).....LA TRAVIATA

Conductors—Lt. Col. J. M. DOYLE & VILEM TAUSKY

Producer—H. POWELL LLOYD, LONDON

BETTY SAGON

JAMES JOHNSTON

PRICES :

Dress Circle 12/6 Orchestra Stalls 10/- Second Circle 6/6

Front Parterre 6/6 Pit Stalls 4/- Gallery 3/-

IVAN DIXON Seats in Boxes 10/- each BRUCE DARGAVEL

HOWELL GLYNNE WILLIAM EDWARDS RICHARD MASON

BOOKING AT OPERA HOUSE FROM JULY 28th

Unreserved seats for Pit Stalls and Gallery  
also on sale from that date.



# OPERA HOUSE

## FESTIVAL OF GRAND OPERA

A. A. HEALY presents  
Dublin Grand Opera Society  
in association with  
Radio Eireann

RADIO EIREANN LIGHT ORCHESTRA

(Leader—Jack Cheattle)

TO-NIGHT AT 8 P.M.

"IL TROVATORE"

Victoria Elliott, Edith Coates, Ivan Dixon,  
Bruce Dargavel, Richard Mason.

Conductor—JAMES GIBSON

Producer—H. POWELL LLOYD, London

# OPERA HOUSE

## FESTIVAL OF GRAND OPERA

A. A. HEALY presents  
Dublin Grand Opera Society  
in association with  
Radio Eireann

RADIO EIREANN LIGHT ORCHESTRA

(Leader—Jack Cheattle)

TO-NIGHT AT 8 P.M.

"FAUST"

Veronica Dunne, Betty Sagon, James  
Johnston, Howell Glynn, Wm. Edwards

Conductor—LT.-COL. J. M. DOYLE

Producer—H. POWELL LLOYD, London.

Wednesday ..... IL TROVATORE

Thursday ..... FAUST

Friday ..... LA TRAVIATA

Saturday (Matinee) ..... FAUST

Saturday (Night) ..... LA TRAVIATA

# OPERA HOUSE

TO-NIGHT AT 8 SHARP

A. A. HEALY presents  
Dublin Grand Opera Society  
in  
"LA TRAVIATA"

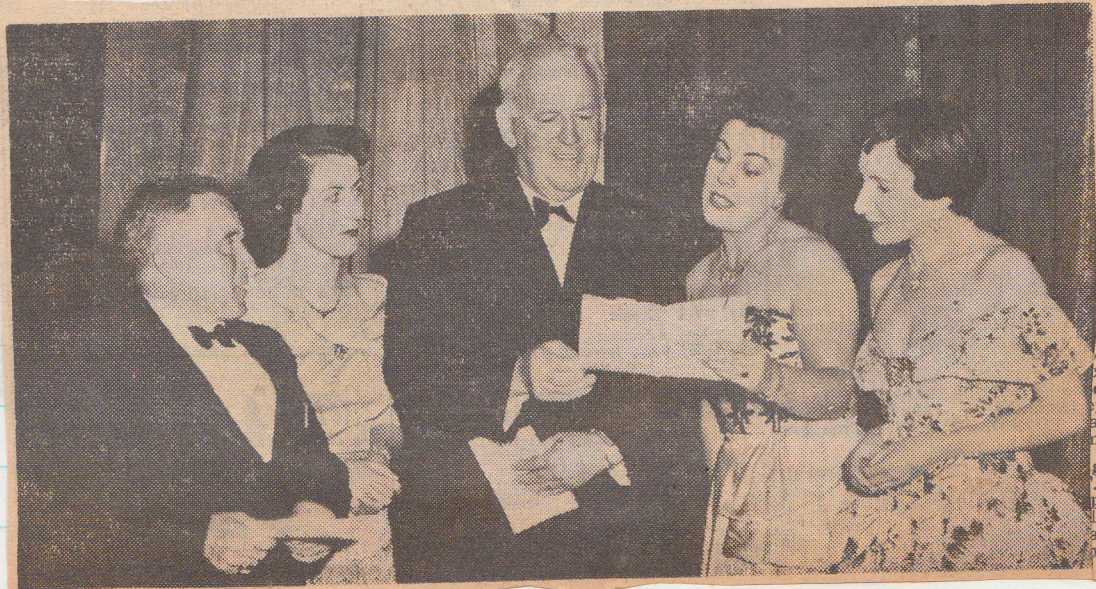
Cast: Ruth Packer, Ivan Dixon, Bruce  
Dargavel, Brendan Cavanagh, Richard  
Mason.

Conductor—JAMES GIBSON.

Producer—H. POWELL LLOYD, London

SATURDAY (Matinee)—"Faust." Satur-  
day (night): "La Traviata."

Talking over the programme  
at the celebrity concert held  
in the Cork Opera House on  
Sunday night are, from left,  
Councillor A. A. Healy, Miss  
Veronica Dunne, the soprano;  
Ald. P. McGrath, T.D., Lord  
Mayor; Miss Betty Sagon, of  
the Carl Rosa Opera Com-  
pany, and Miss Victoria  
Elliott, of Covent Garden.





## "Il Trovatore" At The Opera House

Since the original announcement was made some months ago, Cork opera lovers looked forward with eagerness to the visit of the Dublin Grand Opera Society and guest stars to Cork. The promised visit became a reality last night when the short festival of opera opened with Verdi's "Il Trovatore" at the Opera House. Mr. James Gibson of Covent Garden was the conductor.

Before the curtain rose on this presentation, there was a ripple of excitement and even tensely in the capacity audience. Too many years have passed since Cork was last favoured with grand opera, and the old devotees as well as the new seemed more than usually keen for the start of the work. As the night passed, enthusiasm mounted and it seemed to fire the performers to new heights so that in the final act those on both sides of the footlights were in perfect unison, and enjoyment was indeed complete.

In this presentation of Verdi's opera, three of the principals exceeded all expectations. They were Bruce Dargavel as "Count di Luna," Victoria Elliott as "Leonora" and Edith Coates as "Azucena." The reader who knows "Il Trovatore" may be surprised that the tenor singing the role of "Manrico" is not mentioned with the other three. The reason is that in last night's performance James Johnston, who took this role, was not so impressive until the fourth act when he really sang and acted in first class fashion. On his performance in this act he rated with the other three principals. One might be tempted to ascribe the improvement to the general run of things on an opening night when a company is still finding its way on a strange stage.

### MANY CURTAIN CALLS

There was, in fact, little to enthuse about in the opening scene in which Richard Mason as "Ferrando" and the male chorus sang pleasantly but not too comprehensively, and it was not until Miss Elliott and Mr. Dargavel made their appearance in the second scene of this act that one could really settle down, feeling really satisfied. From then onwards, one delight followed another and, when, in the fourth act, Johnston came into his own, the audience reached the ecstatic stage, and curtain call after curtain call was insisted upon.

One got a very early and most favourable impression of the singing and acting capabilities of Miss Elliott and Mr. Dargavel from the second scene. Miss Elliott is a soprano with a wonderful range and great expression; the melody in her voice and her acting ability make her an ideal opera principal. One would hesitate to choose any particular one of her arias as exceeding the others in beauty, but the audience made its choice in no uncertain fashion last night when "no encores" seemed to be the rule. The audience insisted on an encore for the "Miserere" in which, of course, the soprano leads the unseen tenor and

chorus, and the audience's clamour got its reward. Her solo just prior to this aria was also exceedingly fine.

### A TRIUMPH

Mr. Dargavel in voice and appearance was an ideal "Count di Luna." Everything he did, said and sang carried its meade of drama, and his voice was of the quality to which one could listen for hours and hours. He reached his peak in "Tempest of the Heart" which was sung with perfect expression and which the audience wanted repeated, but did not get. Dargavel and Miss Elliott scored a great triumph in the opening scene of the first act which they carried perfectly.

Edith Coates as "Azucena" did not make an immediate impression. Her contralto voice has a peculiar quality to which one has to become accustomed—a rather rapid process. In last night's performance, she is blessed with excellent diction and can infuse every shade of expression into her voice. In last night's performance she had established herself firmly with the audience midway through her second solo (in which she tells Manrico his real identity).

Musically, perhaps the finest piece of work of the night was the trio of Azucena, Manrico and Leonora in the final score. Here the voices blended perfectly in a highly dramatic three part composition in which the contralto carries the refrain of "Home To Our Mountains." Here too, Mr. Johnston's acting and singing carried conviction and vigour as befitted the character of a warring chieftain and tempestuous lover. Earlier he impressed most in second scene of the third act wherein he hears of the capture and impending conflagration of Azucena. His off-stage singing of "Miserere" was most melodious and in view of the fine impression he made towards the end it was a pity that he was so restrained earlier on.

Richard Mason sang the part of "Ferrando" well, but one would have liked to be able to distinguish more of the words from him and the male voice chorus in the opening scene. Pauline Nolan was adequate as "Inez."

The work of the chorus was always tuneful. It is not an exceptionally big chorus, but the voices are good and the members are well trained in movement. The third act soldiers' chorus was excellent.

In grand opera, half the enjoyment really comes from the orchestra, though one does not always realise this at the time. Playing with the Dublin Grand Opera Society in this visit to Cork is the Radio Eireann Light Orchestra with Mr. Jack Cheate as leader. Under the youthful but most talented conductor, Mr. James Gibson, the orchestra played its full share in the success of last night's performance, and there were many times when the listener could not but be impressed with the beauty of the playing.





Members of the Dublin Grand Opera Society who are at present appearing in the Cork Opera House, photographed when they paid a visit to the Lord Mayor of Cork, Ald. P. McGrath, T.D. ("Examiner").



★ A BARITONE voice new to Dublin, and a voice which, by all reports, Dubliners will not easily forget, will be heard at the Gaiety during the Dublin Grand Opera Society's three-week winter season, which commences on Monday next. It is that of Paulo Silveri, the 38 year-old son of an Italian farmer. Silveri will appear in "The Barber of Seville."

## Sailor, Tailor

★ EDUCATED by the Dominicans near Florence, Silveri first joined the Italian navy on leaving school, but soon tired of the sea and turned to tailoring.

He took singing lessons at the academy in Rome; they erroneously decided he was a bass, not a baritone, and trained him as such; he sang one of the bass roles in "The Mastersingers."

Silveri went back to his old Dominican teacher, Father Perugini, who began a course to develop the young man's upper register.

## Success at Naples

★ AFTER playing minor baritone roles at Rome Opera House, Silveri went to Naples, where his star rose.

He made his debut at Covent Garden Opera House in 1946. At that time he didn't know a word of English.

His wife is Delia Cirino, a pianist.

## Contralto

★ ANOTHER notable new voice—this time a contralto's—will also be heard during the season. Constance Shacklock was born in Nottinghamshire in the same year—1913—as Silveri; like the Italian, her father was also a farmer.

Constance, as a young girl, won prizes at festivals and sang in oratorio. Just before the war she won a scholarship at the Royal Academy of Music in London.

Her first engagements were in

1946 with International Ballet; she sang in their productions of the John Milton masque, "Comus."

She drew the attention of the Covent Garden directors and later that year was invited to join the company.

The following year she married Eric Mitchell, one of the musical coaches at Covent Garden.

## Debut

★ OTHER newcomers include Maria Kinasiewicz, Alvino Misciano and Maria Erato.

Stars already well-known to Dubliners—Franz Vroons, James Johnston, Bruce Dargavel, Howell Glynn, Betty Sagon, Veronica Dunne, Joyce Gartside—have also been engaged.

Dolores Burke, a young Dublin soprano, well-known in musical comedy circles, makes her operatic debut as Micaela in "Carmen" (to be seen during the second week).

The first week's operas are:—  
Monday, Friday and Saturday Evening—"Faust"

Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday Matinee—"Barber of Seville."

Wednesday—"L'Amico Fritz" (Mascagni).



# GAIETY THEATRE

DECEMBER 1st to 20th



WINTER 1952 SEASON

## DUBLIN GRAND OPERA SOCIETY

cumann ardo-ceol dráma at éilíat  
11 LEINSTER STREET, SOUTH

**FAUST**

(Gounod)

**CARMEN**

(Bizet)

**TOSCA**

(Puccini)

and in association with

## RADIO EIREANN

with the R.E. Symphony Orchestra (Leader: Renzo Marchionni)

**The BARBER OF SEVILLE L'AMICO FRITZ**

(Rossini)

(Mascagni)

**IL TROVATORE**

(Verdi)

Conductors:

LIEUT.-COL. J. M. DOYLE : VILEM TAUSKY  
GIUSEPPE MORELLI

Cast will include:

GIANELLA BORELLI : DOLORES BURKE : VERONICA DUNNE  
MARIA ERATO : JOYCE GARTSIDE : MARIA KINASIEWICZ  
~~JOSEPHINE O'HAGAN~~ : LICIA ROSSINI : BETTY SAGON  
*PATRICIA O'KEEFE* MARIA SALVO : CONSTANCE SHACKLOCK  
RODOLFO AZZOLINI : GIORGIO BARDI : HAROLD BLACKBURN  
BRENDAN CAVANAGH : PLINIO CLABASSI : BRUCE DARGAVEL  
WILLIAM EDWARDS : JOSEPH FLOOD : HOWELL GLYNNE  
JAMES JOHNSTON : ARTURA LA PORTA  
ALVINIO MISCIANO : SAM MOONEY  
RODOLFO MORARO : PAULO SILVERI : FRANZ VROONS

Principal Dancer: CHERRY CLARK

Producers:

POWELL LLOYD : BRUNO NOFRI : SYDNEY RUSSELL

Director of Chorus:

MOIRA GRIFFITH



# INFORMATION

BOOKING OPENS MONDAY, NOVEMBER 17th, 1952, AT THE THEATRE, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.

PRICES—Reserved: Boxes, 84/-, 63/-, 42/-; Dress Circle, 10/6; Parterre, 7/6; Upper Circle, 5/-. Unreserved: Gallery, 2/6.

Evening performances at 7.30 p.m. Matinees at 2.30 p.m. SMOKING ABSOLUTELY FORBIDDEN in the auditorium.

Patrons' Nights on December 3, 8, 10, 12 (L'Amico Fritz). Gala Night December 2.

## MONTH OF DECEMBER

MONDAY	1st <b>FAUST</b> Gartside, Sagon, Johnston Glynne, Edwards.	8th <b>L'AMICO FRITZ</b> As on December 3rd	15th <b>IL TROVATORE</b> Rossini, Salvo, Azzolini, Bardi, Clabassi, Cavanagh.
TUESDAY	2nd <b>BARBER OF SEVILLE</b> Erato, Borelli, Silveri, Moraro, La Porta, Clabassi, Mooney.	9th <b>CARMEN</b> <i>Keefe</i> Shacklock, Burke, Sagon, O'Hagan, Vroons, Dargavel, Blackburn, Cavanagh, Flood, Mooney.	16th <b>TOSCA</b> Kinasiewicz, Vroons, Dargavel, Blackburn, Flood, Cavanagh.
WEDNESDAY	3rd <b>L'AMICO FRITZ</b> Dunne, Salvo or Borelli, Misciano, La Porta.	10th <b>L'AMICO FRITZ</b> As on December 3rd	17th <b>IL TROVATORE</b> As on December 15th
THURSDAY	4th <b>BARBER OF SEVILLE</b> As on December 2nd	11th <b>CARMEN</b> As on December 9th	18th <b>TOSCA</b> As on December 16th
FRIDAY	5th <b>FAUST</b> As on December 1st	12th <b>L'AMICO FRITZ</b> As on December 3rd	19th <b>IL TROVATORE</b> As on December 15th
SAT. MAT.	6th <b>BARBER OF SEVILLE</b> As on December 2nd	13th <b>CARMEN</b> As on December 9th	20th <b>TOSCA</b> As on December 16th
SAT. EVG.	6th <b>FAUST</b> As on December 1st	13th <b>BARBER OF SEVILLE</b> As on December 2nd	20th <b>IL TROVATORE</b> As on December 15th

The Management reserves the right to make unavoidable alterations without notice.

FOR YOUR  
CONVENIENCE  
IN  
BOOKING

**FAUST** ... (3 performances)—Mon., Fri., Sat. Evening; December 1st, 5th and 6th.  
**BARBER OF SEVILLE** ... (4 performances)—Tues., Thurs., Sat. Mat., Sat. Evg.; Dec. 2nd, 4th, 6th at 2.30, and 13th.  
**L'AMICO FRITZ** ... (4 performances)—Wed., Mon., Wed., Fri.; December 3rd, 8th, 10th and 12th.  
**CARMEN** ... (3 performances)—Tues., Thurs., Sat. Matinee; December 9th, 11th, 13th at 2.30 p.m.  
**IL TROVATORE** ... (4 performances)—Mon., Wed., Fri., Sat. Evening; December 15th, 17th, 19th and 20th.  
**TOSCA** ... (3 performances)—Tues., Thurs., Sat. Matinee; December 16th, 18th and 20th.



# Effective Production of "Faust"

By JOSEPH O'NEILL

"Irish Independent" Music Critic.

THE Dublin Grand Opera Society opened its winter season at the Gaiety Theatre with a performance of Gounod's "Faust," conducted by Lieut.-Col. J. M. Doyle.

Direction and production by Powell Lloyd marked an improvement in this presentation from those of previous seasons. Loose ends were tied-up. The awful bed of flowers centre stage in Act 2 was dispensed with, and Mephistopheles made an effective exit, having dominated the dramatic situation.

There was reasonableness in the closing of the act, with Faust and Marguerite together. Siebel's song, "When All Was Young," became a part of the dramatic plot, instead of just being an interpolated ballad to serve the soloist.

There were many other touches which showed thought and care for dramatic detail. The long interval

between acts 1 and 2 was rewarded by the good setting given to Marguerite's house and garden.

James Johnston's "Faust" is familiar to Dublin audiences. Again, the clarity of his diction, the richness of his voice, and its expert management gave considerable pleasure. His Garden Scene singing had many delightful moments.

Joyce Gartside made a charming Marguerite. Though her voice is light in texture, it fits the character. The orchestra could have made a better effort to balance her singing in the love scenes, especially the wood-wind section.

This time, the part of Siebel was played and sung convincingly, moving into its proper importance in the opera. Betty Sagon was responsible for this unusual dramatic and vocal success. Both her "Flower Song" and "When All Was Young" were well sung and had a meaning.

Howell Glynn was the competent operatic artist in his rich singing of Mephistopheles. A baritone new to Dublin, William Edwards, sang the part of Valentine. Possessing a full-toned baritone voice, he is rather given to cut-off sustained notes with an added vowel sound. Ralph Morris as Wagner and Anne Bishop as Martha sang their parts well.

Choral singing gets a big chance in this opera. There was a good improvement in the tone quality of the tenor line, their singing being free from the roughness of previous seasons.

The Kermesse scene choruses and the Soldiers' Song choruses were very well delivered. The off-stage choruses were well in tune and time, and there was a general competence in singing and movement.

Lieut.-Col. Doyle kept a fine control.

THE Dublin Grand Opera Society opened a three-weeks' season with a performance of Faust at the Gaiety Theatre last night, when the main part was sung by James Johnston with rich effortless tone and his usual excellent diction.

Joyce Gartside as Marguerite gave a most convincing characterisation, and although the climaxes taxed her vocal resources slightly, the Jewel Song and the love duet had a freshness that is all too rare.

Howell Glynn as Mephistopheles gave an impressive performance. Betty Sagon was appearing as Siebel and William Edwards was a dramatic Valentine. Other parts were played by Ralph Morris and Anne Bishop.

The chorus whose fresh and colourful costumes added greatly to the performance, sang with enthusiasm and artistry. A large orchestra was ably conducted by Lieut.-Col. J. M. Doyle. Production was by Powell Lloyd.

# A Splendid Baritone

CONTINUING its season at the Gaiety Theatre, the Dublin Grand Opera Society, in association with Radio Eireann, presented Rossini's opera, "The Barber of Seville." The President and Mrs. O'Kelly attended the performance.

A cast of Italian principals, plus Dublin's Sam Mooney, who became Italian for the night, and some of the D.G.O.S. chorus, were under the stage direction and production of Bruno Nofri. Radio Eireann Symphony Orchestra completed the ensemble, which was conducted by Giuseppe Morelli.

All these contributors merged beautifully into a performance of the "Barber" which must have been a revelation to the full house audience, who have probably seen many previous presentations here.

The costumes were by Casa D'Arte of Rome, and the scenery was specially painted by Carlo Santonocito.

Paolo Silveri, world famous operatic baritone making his first appearance in Dublin, was in the title role. I had the pleasure of hearing him perform in "Marriage of Figaro" (Mozart) with the Glyndebourne Company at Edinburgh Festival; so was not surprised to find him dominating the stage by the remarkable power of his voice his picturesque characterisation and general acting ability.

Yet, there were fine singers with him. Dublin has not before heard the part of Dr Bartolo sung in such rich fashion as by Arturo La Porta, without one iota of its comic content neglected.

Another rich male voice was heard from Plinio Clabassi, as "Basilio," and this pair brought subtle touches of humour to their playing, which gained many more laughs from the audience than when broader effects were employed.

Rodolfo Moraro was the Count, and Maria Erato, the Rosina. Both understood completely the style of singing necessary for the best presentation of Rossini's arias. Inflection, ornamentation, and general vocal display were splendidly employed to give best effect to their music.

Conductor Giuseppe Morelli secured a highly artistic performance from R.E. Symphony Orchestra, the playing being colourful, precise, and always in character with the stage action.

## GAIETY THEATRE

NIGHTLY 7.30. MAT SAT. 2.30

DUBLIN GRAND OPERA SOCIETY

In association with Radio Eireann

TO-NIGHT and SATURDAY Matinee

BARBER OF SEVILLE

MARIA ERATO, GIANELLA BORELLI

ARTURA LA PORTA

PAOLO SILVERI, RODOLFO MORARO

Friday & Saturday ... FAUST





*Maria Erato as Rosina.*

—"Herald" photo (R.W.).

## "THE BARBER"—BY THE ITALIANS

★ WITH the exception of Dublin's Sam Mooney, the Italian guest artistes were in control in the Dublin Grand Opera Society's presentation of Rossini's "The Barber of Seville" at the Gaiety last night. The costumes—very attractive and gay—and the scenic designs were also Italian products.

The visitors performed together as a well-balanced team and effectively realised the best features of the

comedy. And judging from the sparkling pace at which conductor Giuseppe Morelli took the overture, it was soon apparent that we were in for a lively account of Rossini's brilliant score.



Undoubtedly the man who stole the show was Paolo Silveri, whose irrepressible and high-spirited Figaro was a constant delight. Allied to his rich, resonant baritone voice was a splendid sense of comedy, with additional touches of his own here and there.

Maria Erato, as Rosina, displayed a pleasant and melodious voice.

Rodolfo Moraro's Count Almaviva was disappointing. His acting was good, but his voice had little appeal and was lacking in real clarity and carrying power.

The crotchety Bartolo was rousinglly portrayed by Arturo la Porta, who sang heartily and



*Paolo Silveri as the Barber.*

—"Herald" photo (R.W.).

seemed to revel in the fun his part provides. Plinio Clabassi cut an appropriately ridiculous figure as Don Basilio—his first appearance sent the audience into peals of laughter—and treated us to a lovely bass voice, notably in the famous Slander aria.

Gianella Borelli as Marcellina and Sam Mooney as Fiorello gave sound support.



With regard to the settings, the Italians had nothing on the Hamburg State Opera's creation, when here last year. For instance, the exterior of a house in the first scene was a most unconvincing affair. Production was by Bruno Nofri.

The President and Mrs. O'Kelly were present at the performance.

N. W.



## GAIETY Theatre

Nightly 7.30. Matinee Sat., 2.30  
DUBLIN GRAND OPERA SOCIETY  
In association with Radio Eireann  
TO-NIGHT, 7.30

### L'AMICO FRITZ

VERONICA DUNNE  
MARIA SALVO : ALINO MISCIANO  
ARTURA LA PORTA

Thurs. Evg., Sat. Mat.—  
BARBER OF SEVILLE  
Fri. and Sat. Evg. FAUST

SEATERS NOT SEATED

★ SOME composers, though most prolific are enrolled in the annals of fame as the creators of only one work.

The Italian, Pietro Mascagni, is such a composer, for when one thinks of him it is always with "Cavalleria Rusticana" in mind.

Even then he does not stand in the limelight alone as his opera is always performed with that of another one work composer, Leoncavallo's "I Pagliacci."

However, last night at the Gaiety we had an opportunity of hearing Mascagni's seldom performed "L'Amico Fritz."

The story is very frail, which, perhaps, explains the opera's long absences from the stage. It

deals with the old theme of true love never running smoothly. Unlike "Cavalleria," it has a happy ending. The score is most delightful and is full of brilliant writing for the principals.

For a Dublin audience last night's performance had a feature of more than usual interest.

In the role of Susel was Veronica Dunne from Clontarf, just back from her Covent Garden debut.

Her's was a delicate and inspiring interpretation. She could hardly have had a more satisfying score, which she sang with style and grace. In the final act we heard the full dramatic quality of a voice of rare beauty. Miss Dunne's acting was of a high quality.

The Gaiety stage has seldom been graced with a more outstanding singer than the Irish soprano.

In the title role was Alvinio Misciano, a most talented tenor. A fine actor, with an impressive presence, his voice is clear and sweet in the upper register and rich in the middle tones. In the main duets with Miss Dunne the two voices blended magnificently.

As Rabbi David, Arturo La Porta sang in a full bass voice. He maintained the high level of acting. Maria Salvo filled the role of Beppe adequately.

The set of the second act was very impressive, a brightly-lit garden. The dining room of the first and last acts was marred by too great a predominance of brown, which gave a rather dark appearance to this set.

The orchestra under Giuseppe Morelli played exceedingly well, the strings have rarely been heard to better advantage.

Minor roles were filled by Brendan Cavanagh, Noel Reid and Maura Mooney. The chorus was off-stage, except for a brief moment, and had little of note to sing.

B. O.

## Principals Excel In Mascagni Work

By JOSEPH O'NEILL

"Irish Independent" Music Critic

THE third opera presented by the Dublin Grand Opera Society in its season at the Gaiety Theatre, was "L'Amico Fritz," by Mascagni, which had a group of the Italian guest-artist singers; their specially designed costumes and scenery from Rome; producer Bruno Nofri; and Radio Eireann Symphony Orchestra, with conductor Giuseppe Morelli.

The Dublin soprano, Veronica Dunne, has been thought of so much in association with Italy, that it is necessary to stress that the Irish artist worked with the Italian group in the principal trio of parts.

This work of Mascagni is little known here. The composer is always associated with hot-blooded drama, because of his popular "Cavalleria Rusticana." In "L'Amico Fritz" he brings us a quiet romantic opera, in a placid pastoral scene.

The rich bachelor, Fritz, falls in love with his tenant's lovely daughter, and is manoeuvred into an avowal by the local match-maker and friend. All ends happily. Naturally, lyric singing is the

mainstay of the opera. This is backed by Mascagni's grand sense of orchestration. To me, the principal enjoyment of the opera came from the orchestral score. From it we pictured the village life, the serenades and the disturbing thoughts of love for a "bambino" girl by the confirmed bachelor.

Alvinio Misciano as Fritz, and Veronica Dunne as Susel, worked their way from first-act deference, to second-act flirtation, and third-act climatic love scene, with artistry and good vocal judgment.

Veronica Dunne grows in stature with each operatic performance, but has not yet achieved sonority of tone in low-pitched recitative. Her surging, passionate singing in the last act, was highly effective.

Misciano has a pleasing tenor voice, gives considerable variety to his singing, and is a competent actor.

As Rabbi David, Arturo La Porta carried the action of the story, as the match-maker, with artistic skill and good singing.

The small parts of Fritz's friends were taken by Brendan Cavanagh and Noel Reid. The Gypsy part was played by Marco Salvo.

Orchestral playing was colourful; and the gypsy violin serenade played by leader Renzo Marchionni was very pleasing.





Veronica Dunne pictured in her dressing-room last night before she went on stage to sing the role of Susel.



Alvinio Misciano, who sang the role of Fritz Kobus.



★ A NEW CARMEN is a major theatrical vent which is capable of arousing in opera-lovers something of the same interest an astronomer feels when a new star swims into view.

Last evening at the **Gaiety**, Dublin saw a new and exciting Carmen in Constance Shacklock, from Covent Garden, a contralto of Wagnerian renown whose



**Constance Shacklock**

great range permits her to sing, as in Bizet's opera, a mezzo-soprano role.

She is able to do what so few singers can successfully accomplish—dominate the role at every turn. The powerful voice possesses a lustrous beauty.

Miss Shacklock used a new English translation, which did away with (in the Habanera) such a monstrosously uncouth line as "Love will like a wild birdling fly."

As an acting performance alone, this Carmen was fascinating to watch. It was no conventional portrayal; the hard, even brutal aspects of the character of the slutish gypsy were vividly delineated.

Franz Vroons was again the unhappy Don Jose; once again the Netherlands tenor's singing

of the "Flower Song" was a magical moment in the opera.

The insensitivity of audiences is a frequent criticism; last night's capacity gathering showed impeccable musical manners by waiting until the very last notes of the orchestral to the aria had died away before breaking into applause.

An encore could not be resisted, and Vroons gave this in the French original (he sang the rest of the opera in English and very good his enunciation was, too).

## Satisfying

The intensity of his acting in the last act as the anguished soldier was most generously acknowledged by the audience.

In the round, it was one of the most satisfying productions of "Carmen" yet given by the Dublin Grand Opera Society.

Bruce Dargavel subtly expressed in voice and looks the egotism of the Toreador. Dolores Burke, a young and handsome Dublin girl had a splendid debut as Micaela. The singing of the aria in the third act—except for a tendency at the beginning to rush at the notes—was commendable.

Betty Sagon, Harry Blackburn, Patricia O'Keeffe, Joseph Flood, Brendan Cavanagh and Sam Mooney sang the supporting roles. Cherry Clark's dancing was a special feature. The chorus singing had a healthy efficiency.

Vilem Tausky, as conductor, gave the opera splendid shape, and the orchestral detail was particularly sensitive.

There was fresh scenery—Lillias Pastia's tavern has at last got a Spanish look about it. The producer was Powell Lloyd.

*It is only fair to add, as a tail-piece, that the Gaiety's skycloth which can be so unmanageable was exceedingly well-behaved last night: there were no wrinkles visible. Bravo!*

J. F.



# Covent Garden Singer Enriches "Carmen"

By JOSEPH O'NEILL

Irish Independent" Music Critic

**B**IZET'S "Carmen" was the fourth opera presented by the Dublin Grand Opera Society in its season at the Gaiety Theatre. It marked the first appearance in Dublin of the Covent Garden Opera principal, Constance Shacklock, who took the title role.

How the part of Carmen should be interpreted has long been, and will continue to be a source of interminable debate by critics and devotees of opera. The devastatingly fascinating woman is a changeable character.

The fundamental qualifications for success boil down to capable singing and acting. Constance Shacklock's voice is ideally suited to the music—a rich contralto of splendid range and seductive in quality.

She brings to her portrayal of the character an intensity which never misses a dramatic effect. Though there is not always a natural spontaneity in her acting, her performance has dramatic thought behind it, and a polish of stage technique which makes it highly effective and convincing.

## DRAMATIC EFFECT

With Franz Vroons as Don Jose, the passionate surge of the opera was fully realised. The last act played in a highly emotional atmosphere, created by these two fine artists, and a great dramatic effect was obtained.

The Escamillo was Bruce Dargavel, who, though obviously suffering from a cold, added grandiloquence to the picturesque role.

A young Dublin soprano, Dolores Burke, made her operatic debut in the part of "Micaela." Her voice carried well over the orchestra, and sounded richest in its middle register.

The quintette, sung by Patricia O'Keeffe, Betty Sagon, Joseph Flood and Sam Mooney with Carmen, was highly successful.

Harry Blackburne was the Captain and Brendan Cavanagh, the Morales, both fitting well into the cast. There

was good dancing by Cherry Clark in Act IV.

Choral singing was very good in all sections, and Vilem Tausky conducted. His vast experience in opera direction counted enormously in the smoothness of the performance and the excellent orchestral support to the stage. The production by Powell Lloyd was very competent, but who is responsible for the absurdly long intervals?

Bizet's "Carmen," perhaps the most popular of French operas, is appreciated alike by the musician, who realises the skill with which the composer has treated the subject, and by the amateur, who is carried away by the colour and verve of the music.

The performance last night at the Gaiety Theatre by the Dublin Grand Opera Society was a satisfying experience, and the enthusiasm it received was amply justified.

Constance Shacklock, new to us in Dublin in the role of Carmen, gave a characterisation that was full of subtlety and vocally distinguished, and her highly dramatic temperament brought out all the fire and passion of the gipsy's nature.

Franz Vroons sang brilliantly with a dramatic urge in every moment. His last act is really thrilling.

A young Irish singer, Dolores Burke, making her debut in opera, was a charming Micaela. She has a lovely tone and fine sense of expression and gave her part that light simplicity and sincerity of manner that it needs to be plausible. An excellent first performance.

The toreador music, with Bruce Dargavel as an impressive bullfighter, had great excitement, and the quintet was for once well polished. The chorus followed the conductor well, but was lacking in tone and resonance. Vilem Tausky, conducting, can work miracles with a small orchestra, and everyone responded brilliantly to his demands. The playing was excellent and a feature of the performance.

R. J.

**A** VERY satisfying performance of "Carmen" (though the night was over-long, extending well over three hours, thanks to the tediously long intervals) was given last night at the Gaiety by the Dublin Grand Opera Society.

With this opera, as with others, it is now a set policy of the company to put singers of reliability and established reputation in the smaller roles. The consequence is that the course of the plot becomes quite clear and the work appears as a shapely whole, with the significance of every character apparent and all the parts falling into place neatly.

Thus, the by-play and side-chatter in the Square at the opening receives more attention and is more clearly presented than of yore, and the same may be said of the smugglers' interlude in the inn and the card-reading scene in Act III. Brendan Kavanagh as Morales, Sam Mooney and Joseph Flood as the smugglers, and Betty Sagon and Patricia O'Keeffe as their gipsy girl friends, made their parts real, live, energetic human beings whose words and actions were completely intelligible.

But, of course, the whole opera revolves around the central figures of Carmen and Don Jose. The title role was played by a contralto new to Dublin, but one who enjoys a very considerable reputation in Britain—Constance Shacklock. Her voice is rich and full in all registers and is used with highly dramatic expression. As an interpretation of this wonderful part, her performance was full of interest.

## FACIAL EXPRESSIONS

It was certainly an energetic conception. Miss Shacklock can dance with the touch of the expert and has a remarkable range of facial expressions, including two or three different kinds of scowls. The suggestion of feline ferocity was there, too, but this was a refined Carmen nevertheless and always dignified in spite of the rough treatment handed out by the menfolk, Dr. Jose especially. In the latter part Franz Vroons repeated former successes here, including the encore in French of the Flower Song. The simple character—or should we say foolishness?—of the man, his passionate nature and utter recklessness stand out in relief in this rendering. Mr. Vroon's voice, a light, flexible and expressive tenor, is the perfect counterpart to his splendid acting.

The swaggering Escamillo was acted with spirit and sung with ringing effect by Bruce Dargavel, and in Harold Blackburne we had a properly stolid Zuniga. In the part of the rather colourless Michaela, Dolores Burke, a Dublin girl, who has won high favour for her work in musical comedy, made her operatic debut. She sang out well and made an excellent impression; her voice has volume and sweetness, though the upper notes are not yet under complete control.

Cherry Clark, as the principal dancer, distinguished herself again. Vilem Tausky brought stage and orchestra through the score with a clear beat, and the neat and business-like production was by Powell Lloyd.



# GAIETY THEATRE

Nightly 7.30. Matinee Saturday, 2.30.

Dublin Grand Opera Society

In Association with Radio Eireann

TO-NIGHT FRI. & SAT. EVG.

## IL TROVATORE

LICIA ROSSINI MARIA SALVO  
RODOLFO AZZOLINI

GIORGIO BARDI PLINIO CLABASSI

Thurs. Ev., Sat. Mat.—"TOSCA"

## Society's Moderate 'Trovatore'

LAST night's performance of Verdi's "Il Trovatore" by the Dublin Grand Opera Society at the Gaiety Theatre was the least successful of the productions this season.

There were five Italian newcomers, and the entire performance was in Italian.

Leonora (Licia Rossini) though a sympathetic artist, lacked the technical control and quality to sustain a line firm enough for Verdi's demands.

Plinio Clabassi, a most commanding Ferrando, gave the best vocal performance of the evening. Giorgio Bardi's serviceable voice was hardly warm enough for Manrico's purpose.

Mario Salvo's Azucena had some weak moments, as had Rodolfo Azzolini (Di Luna), but they both improved as the evening progressed.

The chorus was extraordinarily weak and often inaudible. Lt.-Col. J. M. Doyle conducted the Radio Eireann Symphony Orchestra with intense vitality, if not at all points reaching the nobility proper to the great work.

R. J.

## Impressive Singer Lacked Support

By JOSEPH O'NEILL

"Irish Independent" Music Critic

FOR the third week of its season at the Gaiety Theatre, the Dublin Grand Opera Society opened with Verdi's "Il Trovatore," sung in Italian.

The major roles were taken by a group of Italian singers. When the first scene of Act I brought a Ferrando of unusual quality, Plinio Clabassi, whose rich voice instantly impressed, it was thought that a feast of splendid singing must be in store for the remainder of the opera.

This promise was not fulfilled. There was a fair level of capable singing, but an impressive standard was not reached.

Licia Rossini sang Leonora, with a musical quality of voice. A slight vibrato robbed the music of its best effect.

A useful operatic tenor voice was displayed by Giorgio Bardi in the role of Manrico. He required unusual freedom in tempo and time values, which must have caused some worry to conductor Lieut.-Col.

J. M. Doyle. His voice was pleasing and it has a fine top register, with which he made many popular effects.

### GOOD CHARACTERISATION

Rodolfo Azzolini was a good Count, possessing a good vocal control to manage the big range of his music.

There was a good characterisation of the part of Azucena given by Mario Salvo, but it was only in quiet restrained singing that her vocalism gave any satisfaction.

Supporting singers were: Beulah Cowan (Inez), Brendan Cavanagh (Ruiz), and Barry O'Sullivan (Gypsy).

The Society's chorus showed a surprising lack of tone in the big choruses. The Anvil Chorus seemed at half strength from the numbers on the stage. The men's chorus in Act III was also weak in tone. Care should be taken in exit, a number of the soldiers exiting through the Count's tent!

Radio Eireann Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Lieut.-Col. J. M. Doyle, gave good effect to the dramatic music. The conductor obtained a remarkable smoothness, considering the liberties taken by some of the soloists. Production was by Sydney Russell.

A cast composed of Italian principals supported by local singers was presented by the Dublin Grand Opera Society in "Il Trovatore" at the Gaiety last night, when the third week of the season opened.

Quite a remarkable feature of the performance was the prominence achieved by the secondary character, Ferrando. This part was played by Plinio Clabassi, a man of imposing physical proportions and gifted with a baritone voice of great richness of tone; he had already shown his quality when he played Basilio in "The Barber." He began the opera with the narrative sung with impressive dramatic force and whenever he appeared in the course of the action filled the stage.

The principals sang well and received enthusiastic applause, but it was not Italian operatic singing at its best. Giorgio Bardi as Manrico did not quite reach the heights of fire and passion that are expected of that fantastic hero. His voice is flexible enough for the exacting music and he showed that he could hold on to a high note with admirable tenacity; his phrasing at times was novel.

The hapless Count (the real victim of circumstances if ever there was one) was sung and acted with feeling and dignity by Rodolfo Azzolini and Leonora's coloratura griefs were given acceptable expression by Licia Rossini.

The principals were completed by Maria Salvo as the old gypsy mother—the lady who made the inexplicable mistake of throwing her own baby into the fire instead of the Count's and thus causing all the troubles of "Il Trovatore." She showed a clear understanding of the dramatic possibilities of the part and sang with vigour. Brendan Cavanagh's fine tenor voice was heard in the small part of Ruiz.

In the first act Beulah Cowan had some good moments as Inez. The chorus had not sufficient numerical strength to put over satisfactorily the celebrated crowd scenes in this opera, and the anvil chorus made little impression.

Lieut.-Col. Doyle rendered the melody-laden score with a decisive beat, though at times the tempi were on the sluggish side. Production was by Sydney Russell.

To-night—"Tosca."



**P**UCCINI'S genius for dramatic effects is apparent throughout the three acts of "Tosca," presented last night at the Gaiety as the sixth work of the Dublin Grand Opera Society's season, and both singers and orchestra rose to the occasion.

It was a vivid performance of a piece that is not so much an opera in the popular sense of the word as a sensational melodrama with incidental music that accords perfectly with the traffic of the stage. The three leading characters were admirably done. Much interest centred in Bruce Dargaval's appearance as Scarpia—his first time to play the part here or elsewhere. It was an interpretation softer in outline than we are accustomed to, with emphasis on the cynical and calculating side to the character of this celebrated arch-villain, a combination of several kinds of evil.

#### PRINCIPALS' SUCCESS.

By significant gesture and vocal modulations, the singer conveyed the more subtle aspects of the part, but at the same time, preserved the imperious and dominating nature of the man by judicious use of his powerful voice.

"Tosca" was sung by a Polish soprano who has not been heard here before, Maria Kinasiwicz. She made an impressive entry and showed at once that she had the temperament for this exacting part. The emotional stress of the second act was well realised, and throughout she sang with steady tone and feeling for the dramatic situation. The Cavaradossi was that accomplished tenor and actor, Franz Vroons, who gave an energetic and highly-coloured performance. Into his every note and gesture he put fire and feeling, especially in the horrors of the second act. This was as fine a performance as any could wish to see and hear.

#### WELL CAST.

There was very good support for the principals. Brendan Cavanagh has come to front rank as a small part player. He made Spoletta, the secret police agent, a character entire and whole showing by facial expression and action the man's entire submission to Scarpia and Scarpia's plans. The other small part of the Sacristan was again taken by Joseph Flood, that very reliable artist, who gave an interesting and entertaining performance.

Vilem Tausky, who conducted, brought out the dramatic qualities of the score, and the production by Powell Lloyd, went smoothly.

By JOSEPH O'NEILL

#### "Irish Independent" Music Critic

**T**HE final production of the Dublin Grand Opera Society's season at the Gaiety Theatre was Puccini's "Tosca," which brought a full house to hear the international cast of principals.

There was much speculation as to how the popular Welsh singer, Bruce Dargaval, would succeed in his first portrayal of the part of Scarpia. His dominating entry in the first act, and command of tone colour in singing, at once established that he had a thoughtfully considered characterisation to offer, which, as the opera progressed, proved to be very acceptable.

Perhaps the tenderness in his singing to Tosca sounded too romantic, belying its scheming intent, and there may not have been sufficient ruthlessness in his vocal quality when giving drastic orders; but this was a convincing portrayal, with some fine singing to give it weight and authority.

Franz Vroons, who sang in Italian, was the Cavaradossi. This is a part splendidly suited to his vocal equipment. Vroons exudes emotional disturbance in his singing. A mere "non, non" from him illustrates a dramatic situation, with a completeness rarely achieved by an operatic singer.

It is not a particular beauty of

tone quality which makes the appeal in his singing, but his ability to excite the listener by his dramatic conception of the part and its music.

Maria Kinasiwicz, a Polish singer new to Dublin, sang the part of Tosca in satisfying fashion. Her soprano voice is pure in quality and is serene in the highest register. It is not extremely rich in texture, but is always effective. Her last act singing was best in character.

In the smaller parts, Harry Blackburn was vivid as the escaped prisoner, Angelotti, who causes all the tragedy of the opera. Brendan Cavanagh again proved his worth to the Society by his ability to give a polished performance to any small part entrusted to him—this time, that of police agent Spoletta. Once again Joseph Flood scored by his character-study in the part of the Sacristan.

Taking into consideration the limitation of rehearsal available, Vilem Tausky, conductor, achieved a satisfactory co-ordination between orchestra and stage. Direction and production was by Powell Lloyd.

Puccini's "La Tosca," presented by the Dublin Grand Opera Society last night in the Gaiety Theatre as their final production of the season, was distinguished amongst other things, for some of the best orchestral playing we have had recently.

The tone was uniformly good, delicately balanced in the quieter passages, and brilliant without stridency in loud passages. The result was a "Tosca" under the best conditions. The long instrumental introduction to the third act was so well done as to be a revelation of the orchestra's prowess.

Vilem Tausky, who conducted, must be congratulated on a really first-rate achievement.

Franz Vroons as Cavaradossi, singing in Italian, had the full measure of the part, conveying all its subtlety, with appropriate shading of the voice, and a phrasing that had significance as well as shape.

Patricia Lawlor,  
Brendan Cavanagh,  
Franz Vroons

ERA  
CLIO  
LLOYD

Bruce Dargavel, new to the role of Scarpia, was most impressive and sinister and held his voice well over the heavy orchestral accompaniment. Maria Kinasiwicz's Tosca was a most successful characterisation, full of dramatic temperament and well sung, even if some of the music is somewhat unsuited to her style of singing.

Harold Blackburn was quite outstanding vocally as Angelotti, and the remaining cast — Brendan Cavanagh, Joseph Flood — acquitted themselves with distinction. H. Powell Lloyd's production had much to commend it. **R.J.**

## GAIETY THEATRE

NIGHTLY 7.30. MAT. SAT. 2.30.

Dublin Grand Opera Society

TO-NIGHT and SAT. MATINEE:

## TOSCA

Maria Kinasiwicz,

Franz Vroons, Bruce Dargavel

Friday and Sat.: IL TROVATORE



THOMAS ROUND is rehearsing in Dublin for the D.G.O.S. production of "The Bartered Bride."





# THE DUBLIN GRAND OPERA SOCIETY

(cumann árd-óeolóráma áit chlaí)

In association with

## RADIO EIREANN

With

## RADIO EIREANN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Present at

## THE GAIETY THEATRE, DUBLIN

November 30th to December 19th, 1953

### THE BARTERED BRIDE

(FREDERIC SMETANA)

In English

### CARMEN

(GEORGES BIZET)

In English

### LA BOHEME

(GIACOMO PUCCINI)

In English

GUEST ARTISTES—Dolores Burke, Gita Denise, Victoria Elliott, Patricia Lawlor, Josephine O'Hagan, Constance Shacklock, Harold Blackburn, Brendan Cavanagh, Bruce Dargavel, Joseph Flood, Jean Healy, Rowland Jones, Oreste Kirkop, Powell Lloyd, Sam Mooney, Leslie Pearson, Thomas Round, Franz Vroons.

and

## THE HAMBURG STATE OPERA

in

### DON GIOVANNI

In Italian

### IL SERAGLIO

In German

(WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART)

GUEST ARTISTES—Valerie Bak, Clara Ebers, Lore Hoffmann, Annaliese Rothenberger, Elfriede Wasserthal, Toni Blankenheim, Guido Diemer, Walter Geisler, Horst Günter, Theo Herrmann, Fritz Lehnert, Kurt Marschner, James Pease, Sigmund Roth.

CONDUCTORS ..... LIEUT.-COL. J. M. DOYLE, REINHARD LINZ,  
LEOPOLD LUDWIG, VILEM TAUSKY.

PRODUCERS ..... ANDE ANDERSON, POWELL LLOYD, GUNTHER RENNERT

LEADER OF ORCHESTRA ..... RENZO MARCHIONNI

DIRECTOR OF CHORUS ..... LIEUT. FRED O'CALLAGHAN

CHOREOGRAPHER ..... YVONNE OLENA

BOOKING OPENS AT THEATRE, 10 A.M., MONDAY, NOVEMBER 16th.

PRICES : Dress Circle, 15/-; Parterre, 10/- and 8/6; Upper Circle, 5/6; Gallery, 2/6;  
Boxes, £3-0-0, £4-10-0, £6-0-0.

★ SPECIAL MATINEE PRICES : Boxes, £2-2-0, £3-3-0, £4-4-0; Dress Circle, 10/6;  
Parterre, 7/6; Upper Circle, 5/-; Gallery, 2/-.



# INFORMATION

BOOKING OPENS MONDAY, NOVEMBER 16th, 1953, AT THE THEATRE, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.  
**PRICES**—Reserved : Boxes, £6-0-0, £4-10-0, £3-0-0; Dress Circle, 15/-; Parterre, 10/- and 8/6; Upper Circle, 5/6; Unreserved : Gallery, 2/6.  
 Evening performances at 7.30 p.m. Matinees at 2.30 p.m. **SMOKING ABSOLUTELY FORBIDDEN** in the auditorium.  
 Patrons' Nights—The Bartered Bride.

NOVEMBER 30th to DECEMBER 19th  
 FIRST WEEK SECOND WEEK

SPECIAL MATINEE PRICES ON FRONT PAGE.  
 THIRD WEEK

MONDAY	NOVEMBER 30 : <b>THE BARTERED BRIDE</b> Burke, Cavanagh, Dargavel, Flood, Jones, Healy, Lawlor, O'Hagan, Pearson, Powell Lloyd. (Conductor : Lieut.-Col. J. M. Doyle)	DECEMBER 7 :  <b>DON GIOVANNI</b> (Cast as for 1st December)	DECEMBER 14 :  <b>IL SERAGLIO</b> (Cast as for 12th December)
TUESDAY	DECEMBER 1 :  <b>DON GIOVANNI</b> Blankenheim, Ebers, Geisler, Günter, Hoffmann, Pease, Roth, Wasserthal. (Conductor : Leopold Ludwig)	DECEMBER 8 :  <b>CARMEN</b> Burke, Cavanagh, Dargavel, Flood, Lawlor, Mooney, O'Hagan, Pearson, Shacklock, Vroons. (Conductor: Vilem Tausky.)	DECEMBER 15 :  <b>LA BOHEME</b> Blackburn, Burke, Cavanagh, Dargavel, Elliott, Flood, Kirkop, Pearson. (Conductor : Lieut.-Col. J. M. Doyle)
WEDNESDAY	DECEMBER 2 : <b>THE BARTERED BRIDE</b> (Cast as for 30th November)	DECEMBER 9 :  <b>DON GIOVANNI</b> (Cast as for 1st December)	DECEMBER 16 :  <b>IL SERAGLIO</b> (Cast as for 12th December)
THURSDAY	DECEMBER 3 :  <b>DON GIOVANNI</b> (Cast as for 1st December)	DECEMBER 10 :  <b>CARMEN</b> (Cast as for 8th December)	DECEMBER 17 :  <b>LA BOHEME</b> (Cast as for 15th December)
FRIDAY	DECEMBER 4 : <b>THE BARTERED BRIDE</b> Burke, Cavanagh, Dargavel, Flood, Lawlor, O'Hagan, Pearson, Powell Lloyd, Round.	DECEMBER 11 :  <b>DON GIOVANNI</b> (Cast as for 1st December)	DECEMBER 18 :  <b>IL SERAGLIO</b> (Cast as for 12th December)
SAT. MAT.	DECEMBER 5 :  <b>DON GIOVANNI</b> (Cast as for 1st December)	DECEMBER 12 :  <b>CARMEN</b> Burke, Cavanagh, Dargavel, Denise, Flood, Lawlor, Mooney, O'Hagan, Pearson, Vroons.	DECEMBER 19 :  NO AFTERNOON PERFORMANCE
SAT. EVG.	DECEMBER 5 :  <b>THE BARTERED BRIDE</b> (Cast as for 4th December)	DECEMBER 12 :  <b>IL SERAGLIO</b> Bak, Diemer, Herrmann, Lehnert, Marschner, Rothenberger. (Conductor : Reinhard Linz)	DECEMBER 19 :  <b>LA BOHEME</b> (Cast as for 15th December)

THE MANAGEMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO MAKE UNAVOIDABLE ALTERATIONS WITHOUT NOTICE.

FOR YOUR  
 CONVENIENCE  
 IN  
 BOOKING

{	<b>BARTERED BRIDE</b> (Smetana) ... ..	Mon., Wed., Fri., Sat. Evening, 1st Week, Nov. 30, Dec. 2, 4, 5.
	<b>DON GIOVANNI</b> (Mozart) ... ..	Tues., Thurs., Sat. Mat., 1st Week, Dec. 1, 3, 5; & Mon., Wed., Fri., 2nd Week, Dec. 7, 9, 11.
	<b>CARMEN</b> (Bizet) ... ..	Tues., Thurs., Sat. Mat., 2nd Week, Dec. 8, 10, 12.
	<b>IL SERAGLIO</b> (Mozart) ... ..	Sat. Evening, 2nd Week, Dec. 12; and Mon., Wed., Fri., 3rd Week, Dec. 14, 16, 18.
	<b>LA BOHEME</b> (Puccini) ... ..	Tues., Thurs., Sat. Evening, 3rd Week, Dec. 15, 17, 19.



# GAIETY

Nightly 7.30. Matinee Sat. 2.30  
DUBLIN GRAND OPERA SOCIETY  
in Association with Radio Eireann  
TO-NIGHT, FRI. and SAT., 7.30

## THE BARTERED BRIDE

Dolores Rowland Bruce  
BURKE JONES DARGAVEL  
Conductor: Lieut.-Col. J. M. Doyle  
THURS. EVENING, SAT. MATINEE  
**DON GIOVANNI**

★ IT takes courage to begin an opera season with a famous, but, to Dublin, unknown work.

The Dublin Grand Opera Company is, however, now well out of growing pains, and last evening's performance of "The Bartered Bride" at the Gaiety was illuminated with confidence and vigour.

Frederic Smetana's music is irresistible; dance rhythms are never far away, and you find your feet tapping. The long melodies have an appealing and steady flow.

This is comic opera in the best sense of the word; indeed, it might be said, without disrespect, to be a Bohemian forerunner of "Oklahoma." The two creators

of the American musical play must unconsciously have been reminded of Smetana's opera when writing their work.

There is a greater amount than one had imagined of spoken dialogue, which is a blessing, in that it helps to make an unfamiliar plot easy of understanding.

Dolores Burke as the bride who is bartered and who by a ruse discards her simpleton of a suitor and gets her true love sings sweetly and firmly; the two big arias find her in full command. Rowland Jones as her lover also sings with assurance; a tendency to grimace rather too much might be resisted



The biggest hit of the evening was Powell Lloyd's portrait of the stuttering official suitor, the greatest oaf in opera. The role is wonderfully drawn on the right side of comicality and divertingly sung.

Bruce Dargavel brings out the pomposity of the match maker in a fully sonorous voice.

In the opening of the third and final act Joseph Flood as a circus manager, Josephine O'Hagan as a danseuse and Yvonne Olena and Juliette Darnley as ballet dancers are the principals in as colourful a processional and dancing scene as you will find in opera. The costumes, which have come from Sadlers Wells, add immeasurably to the splendid effect.

The chorus, 70 strong, sing admirably although they sometimes so overcrowd the stage that movement is lethargic and grouping difficult.

Lieut.-Col. J. M. Doyle conducted and the Radio Eireann Symphony Orchestra played with spirited accuracy. Powell Lloyd directed the production.

The settings are irreproachable. the Czech atmosphere is unmistakable. All hail to the unrecorded designer!

J. J. F.

## 'Bartered Bride' Has Come—But Not to Stay

Smetana's "Bartered Bride" is something of an institution in Czechoslovakia. It is his most popular folk-song opera outside his native country, but judging by last night's production by the Dublin Grand Opera Society it is doubtful whether it will achieve any great measure of success here.

Individual performances last night were adequate without being in any special way remarkable. Dolores Burke, Bruce Dargavel, Rowland Jones and Powell Lloyd seized every occasion for vocal display that came their way.

Lt.-Col. J. M. Doyle conducting the full R.E. orchestra, started off with great verve from the rushing notes of the overture, but as the story unfolded one missed the feeling of spontaneity.

R. J.

It was a happy choice on the part of the Dublin Grand Opera Society to open its winter season in the Gaiety Theatre, Dublin, last night with Smetana's "The Bartered Bride."

The story is that of a village romance in Bohemia involving the old custom of the marriage contract arranged by the village match-maker through the parents. The particular merit of last night's performance was that the comedy, of which the opera has such a large measure, was never allowed to get out of hand and develop into broad farce. The producer, Powell Lloyd, kept the work rigidly on the rails, with the result that the beauty of the music was never obscured. Throughout the orchestral support (conductor, Lt.-Col. J. M. Doyle) was delightful, though occasionally the voices were inclined to be swamped.

The stage work was in the main excellent. As Marenka, Dolores Burke sang with freshness and appeal. Her voice was splendidly full and showed good range and plenty of colour. She acted the part with sympathetic understanding. Her lover, Hans Jekin, was well played by Rowland Jones, whose voice had a good ringing quality. A great deal depends on the reading of the part of the match-maker, Kecal, and there scarcely could not have been a happier selection for the part than Bruce Dargavel. He proved himself a most accomplished comedy-actor, and his voice had everything that the music and part demanded.

In the essential smaller parts there were neat touches by Powell Lloyd, Leslie Pearson, Patricia Lawlor, Sam Mooney, Joseph Flood, Josephine O'Hagan and Leo Donnelly.

FIRST

FLOOR

Telephone

71450



# ENCHANTING "DON GIOVANNI" AT THE GAIETY

THE Hamburg State Opera gave us "Don Giovanni" at the Gaiety last night as the second work of Dublin Grand Opera Society's season. It was, from first to last, a performance of great smoothness and polish without any awkward or difficult moments. The principals were, for the most part, artists who were seen in the same parts on the first appearance of this distinguished combination in Dublin three and a half years ago.

The title role, however, was taken by James Pease, who had not been heard here before—a fine figure of a man with a commanding voice to match, and all the superficial graces that the role demands. His singing of the opening phrases of "La ci darem" was admirable in its courtesy and insinuating quality, and his rendering of the serenade would have won any feminine heart.

## SPECTACULAR MUSIC

Toni Blankenheim was the faithful Leporello, rather more dignified and less playful than some have been, but with a fine rich voice to tell of his master's amours and answer him back in their confidential line of cross-talk. The tenor role of Don Ottavio is a rather static part with little character to it but some of Mozart's most spectacular music to sing. "Il mio tesoro," the great show-piece of the opera, came from Walter Geisler with effortless ease and perfection of phrasing. The peasant Masetto, a comic and endearing part, was very entertaining in the hands of Horst Inter, and Sigmund Roth brought presence, dignity and authoritative ass notes to the role of the Commandatore.

## SOPRANOS' ROLES

The contrasts between the characters of the three sopranos, united in their defiance against the irrepressible Don, were shown in the performances of Clara Ebers (Donna Anna, sombre and grief-laden), Elfriede Wasserthal (Donna Elvira, wrathful and excited) and Lore Hoffman (Zerlina, flattered and bewildered). All three ladies, by their fluency of phrasing and evenness, showed intimate acquaintance with the music and the Mozartian technique. The chorus, sometimes rather too crowded for the space available, both sang and looked well. The settings—looking like pictures by Watteau—and the costumes, selected with great taste, harmonised excellently with the mood of the whole.

The orchestra, conducted by Leopold Ludwig, was in its best form. The overture was taken to unusually slow tempo but lost none of its beauties thereby. Production was by Gunther Innert.

# GAIETY

Nightly 7.30, Matinee Sat. 2.30  
Dublin Grand Opera Society  
in association with Radio Eireann  
TO-NIGHT and SAT. MATINEE

## CARMEN

Constance Shacklock, Franz Vroons  
Friday—DON GIOVANNI  
Sat. Evening—IL SERAGLIO

## "CARMEN" AT THE GAIETY

A brilliant performance by Constance Shacklock in the title rôle lifted the Dublin Grand Opera Society's presentation of "Carmen" above the average at the Gaiety Theatre last night. This talented visitor from Sadler's Wells had given a noteworthy reading of Bizet's wayward heroine on her last visit, and last night she enhanced her reputation. But Frans Vroons shared much of the honours as the unhappy Don José. There was a tendency for him to lose pitch, but his singing of the Flower Song, and especially its repeat, brought him to his best. Bruce Dargavel handled the colourful part of Escamillo the Toreador.

The success of the local singers was particularly satisfying. Dolores Burke put up a delightful performance as Micaela, adding to the good impression she created in the Smetana opera last week. Her progress will be followed with interest. The quartet of smugglers was excellently played. Sam Mooney and Joseph Flood sang well and got some comedy into their parts, but not too much. Josephine O'Hagan was outstanding as Frasquita. Her singing and acting had a drive that carried her colleagues along, and Patricia Lawlor supported her well as Mercedes. Brendan Cavanagh and Leslie Pearson also carried their parts effectively.

There was plenty of colour and life in the stage settings, with some neat little original touches. There was excellent dancing by a talented team, and producer Powell Lloyd successfully kept a big chorus from getting too much in the way. Lieut.-Col. J. M. Doyle was the conductor.

BIZET'S "Carmen" is to-day one of the most famous of French operas, appreciated alike by the musician, who realises the skill which Bizet has treated the subject and by the amateur opera-goer who is carried away by the colour and verve of the opera.

The enthusiastic reception given to the performance (a purely routine one) last night at the Gaiety Theatre was not altogether justified. Although there is much in Powell Lloyd's production that is, to say the least of it, bizarre, the opera is interestingly presented if not well sung.

Lt.-Col. J. M. Doyle, who conducted, did his best to illuminate Bizet's colourful score, but there were many instances when his choice of tempi left the richness of the detail to be supplied by the memory rather than by the ear.

Franz Vroons, as ever, acts with all the fire that goes to make the character of Don José really live, and although he brought great intensity to the part and music, he was far below his best form, vocally.

Constance Shacklock as Carmen, brings any amount of temperament to her interpretation and has the ability to cover her voice to suit the various dramatic occasions.

Dolores Burke is well suited to the rôle of Micaela both temperamentally and vocally, and as a result she was able to lend the character all the help it needs to make it plausible. Bruce Dargavel excited all with the Toreador music.

R. J.



★ IMPASSIONED singing and intensified acting in the fourth and final act of "Carmen" at the Gaiety last night by Constance Shacklock and Frans Vroons compensated for a presentation that was up to then slow and even a little ponderous.

Miss Shacklock as Carmen has added to her portrayal several touches since last we saw her, touches that further emphasise the earthiness—call it the native vulgarity, if you like—of the fascinating gypsy. She clawed, she violently threw things about. Then in the last act, in the face

of certain death, the actress splendidly brought out the courage of Carmen.

Vroons not only got inside the role of the unfortunate Don Jose but sank himself in it. He reached his finest vocal moments in the Flower Song (which was encored, surely a mistake, artistically, even when sung in French on the second occasion.) Vroon's Don Jose became as one demented in the final scene.

Bruce Dargavel made a convincingly pompous tereador and Dolores Burke a most appealing Micaela.

Josephine O'Hagan, Joseph Flood, Brendan Cavanagh and Sam Mooney were well in the picture in supporting roles. The chorus, strong in numbers, was hardly at its most accurate, especially in the last scene. The first three acts dragged, and intervals that totalled close on one hour were not a help.

The dances could have been curtailed. After Teresa and Luisillo and Pilar Lopez they looked bloodless. The conductor was Lieut.-Col. J. M. Doyle. The production was directed by Powell Lloyd.

J.J.F.

## "LA BOHEME" IN GAIETY THEATRE

A splendid performance of "La Boheme" was given by the Dublin Grand Opera Society in the Gaiety Theatre, Dublin, last night. Oreste Kirkop, in view of his forthcoming venture into films, was a particular centre of interest as the poet Rudolph. He sang and acted the part with great assurance. Bruce Dargavel probably gave his best study of the season as the painter Marcel. Leslie Pearson, as the musician Schaunard, and Harold Blackburn, as the philosopher Colline, were also very efficient.

Victoria Elliott, as the Mimi, played the part with artistry, while Dolores Burke gave a grand performance as Musetta, although she has a tendency to beat time with unnecessary arm movements.

The setting was traditional, with the usual untidiness in the Café Momus scene, mainly caused by overcrowding by the chorus and the introduction of swarms of children, many of whom should have been at home in bed.

## DELIGHTFUL PRESENTATION OF 'LA BOHEME'

PUCCINI'S perennially popular "La Boheme" was given at the Gaiety last night as the fifth work of the present season. It was a very acceptable presentation, well to the liking of the large audience, which was unstinting in its applause.

Great interest centred in the appearance as Rudolph of the Maltese tenor, Oreste Kirkop, a young man of graceful stage presence with the temperament for the part and a voice of splendid ringing and robust quality. His Mimi was the dainty and accomplished Victoria Elliott, who gave eloquent and touching expression to the emotions of the gentle seamstress. The two big scenes between them, at the end of the first and last acts, were admirable examples of operatic co-operation; tenderness in singing and acting and perfect timing achieved all the effects one could have desired.

### BEAUTIFUL DUET

Bruce Dargaval was an energetic Marcel, singing with vigour and clarity in the pleasant recitatives. He put much feeling into the beautiful duet with Rudolph in the last act. The philosopher and musician who make up the gay quartet of Bohemians were agreeable figures in the hands of Harold Blackburn and Leslie Pearson respectively. Making her first appearance as Musetta, Dolores Burke sang with confidence and purity of tone, but it was rather a ponderous interpretation of this light-as-air part, and there was an irritating tendency to beat time with hands and body to the music as it was sung. Brendan Cavanagh and Joseph Flood were sound as usual in the small parts of the landlord and the elderly gay dog.

### CAFE MOMUS SCENE

The difficult Cafe Momus scene was put over quite well, though there was a certain amount of confusion with the management of the crowds. The production marked a return to the practice of touring companies of cutting out the parade of soldiers. To show excitement at non-existent soldiers is not easy for a chorus, and people unfamiliar with the opera would not know what to make of it.

Vilem Tausky guided the orchestra with authority through the intricate beauties of the score and maintained remarkable cohesion between stage and instrumentalists. Production was by Andre Anderson.



Dorothy Wildin

MISS CONSTANCE SHACKLOCK



# Impressive Singing By Maltese Tenor

THE Dublin Grand Opera Society's "La Boheme," presented at the Gaiety Theatre, produced a Rudolph new to Dublin in the Maltese tenor, Oreste Kirkop. Here is a fine voice with excellent timbre, reserves of power and in good control.

The characterisation of the role, too, was excellent. One realised that Rudolph was a poet, a point that is often missed by many successful tenors.

Victoria Elliott gave a moving study of Mimi. Her voice is warm and strong with much power on high notes; although both "They Call Me Mimi," and her "Farewell" aria had a tendency to drag, she gave us some really lovely mezza-voice singing in the death-scene.

Dolores Burke sang Musetta with clarity and ease and her acting had authority, although she makes too much use of hand gestures.

Bruce Dargavel played Marcel with intense conviction, and Leslie Pearson did well in the unrewarding part of Schaunard.

Harold Blackburn was a sturdy Col-2 line, using a clear bass voice to advantage. Its was, perhaps, not necessary to sentimentalise at the end of the "Song Of The Coat," which had made its point perfectly on music alone.

## GOOD PRODUCTION

The production, by Andre Anderson, had many good points. The first act was slow, but there was fine movement in the Cafe Momus scene; it was a good idea to dispense with the soldiers and let the crowd point to an imaginary parade, and would have been better still if all the chorus had pointed in the same direction.

The performance was conducted by

Vilem Tausky, with the required dramatic sweep. The Radio Eireann Symphony Orchestra was allowed to drown the singers from time to time, especially in the first act, but eventually a good balance was attained.

M. MacG.

## 'La Boheme'

LA BOHEME, final production by the Dublin Grand Opera Society's season at the Gaiety Theatre, boasted an excellent cast of principals last night. Victoria Elliott, as Mimi, was in fine voice and her final scene was unusually real and dramatic.

Oreste Kirkop, as Rudolph, and Bruce Dargavel, as Marcel, acted well. Their fine voices and graceful stage deportment distinguished them in all their scenes.

Dolores Burke, an excellent young Irish soprano, essaying the role of Musetta for the first time, has the measure of the character and her performance was studied and authentic.

Vilem Tausky and the R.E. Symphony Orchestra provided a rather uneven orchestral background, ranging from a sensitive, understanding commentary to sheer noisy self-assertiveness.

R. J.

★ DUBLIN saw a new Rudolph in "La Boheme" at the Gaiety last night.

He is Oreste Kirkop, a young and personable Maltese, who looks rather like the early Mario Lanza. Kirkop has a voice of Lanza strength, but he uses it more subtly than does the Italian-American.

But it is not yet quite subtle enough for Puccini. The phrasing last night, in the first act especially, suffered from an impetuosity which blurred a little the vocal line. However, it has, on the whole, a fine upstanding performance and the tenor merited the prolonged applause which greeted him at the conclusion.



Victoria Elliott's Mimi was splendidly sung. A slight touch of a cold became noticeable in the first and last acts, but did not detract from the all-over effect. Here were two voices that could and did soar over the waves of orchestral sound produced by the Radio Eireann Symphony.

Out of his considerable experience Bruce Dargavel gave a sincere and splendid Marcel, and Harold Blackburn's Collire had a rich utterance that found its finest moments in the Song of the Coat.

Leslie Pearson's Schaunard was by comparison, lightweight.

Dolores Burke faithfully sang Musetta's music; greater vivacity, which the role requires, will come.

Brendan Cavenagh as the landlord and Joseph Flood as the Councillor made the most of the roles.

The chorus was scarcely at its best, and the Cafe Momus scene had too many children, who were a distraction.

The view through the garret window is more like Dublin's Smithfield than Paris's Latin Quarter. Surely something better could be devised? The lighting in the first act needs correction. The

scene is supposed to be at night-fall, but what we get is broad daylight.

The conductor was Vilem Tausky, whose direction was obviously an inspiration to cast and orchestra.

J. J. F.

Cavanagh, Bruce Dargavel, Joseph Flood, James Johnston  
Bryden Noel  
CONDUCTORS..... LIEUT.-COL. J. M. DOYLE, GIUSEPPE MORELLI  
MONS. LICINIO REFFICE, VILEM TAUSKY  
PRODUCERS..... BRUNO NOFRI, POWELL LLOYD  
LEADER OF ORCHESTRA..... RENZO MARCHIONNI  
DIRECTORS OF CHORUS..... LIEUT. FRED O'CALLAGHAN, JULIA GRAY

BOOKING OPENS AT THEATRE, 10 a.m. MONDAY, APRIL 19th

PRICES: Dress Circle 15/-; Parquet 12/-; Upper Circle 8/6; Gallery 5/6

Boxes, £3-0-0, £4-10-0, £5-0-0

Performances Commence at 7.30 p.m.





# THE DUBLIN GRAND OPERA SOCIETY

(cumann árd-óeolóráma áť cliať)

In association with

## RADIO EIREANN

with

## RADIO EIREANN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

at

## THE GAIETY THEATRE, DUBLIN

May 3rd to May 29th, 1954

The principals of the *ROME* and *La Scala*, *MILAN* operas

**CECELIA**

(LICINIO REFICE)

**LA TRAVIATA**

(VERDI)

**TOSCA**

(PUCCINI)

### THE FORCE OF DESTINY

(VERDI)

GUEST ARTISTS—Maria Boi, Iselle Favati, Rina Gigli, Caterina Mancini, Palmira Vitali Marini, Giorgio Bardi, Plinio Clabassi, Tommaso Frascati, Giuseppe Forgione, Tito Gobbi, Arturo La Porta, Paolo Silveri

(in the opera *CECELIA*, the Society's chorus will be augmented by  
THE DUBLIN CECELIAN SINGERS—Director AILFRID MACGABHANN)

and

### MADAME BUTTERFLY

(PUCCINI)

### IL TROVATORE

(VERDI)

GUEST ARTISTS—Gita Denise, Victoria Elliott, Rina Gigli, Betty Sagon, Brendan Cavanagh, Bruce Dargavel, Joseph Flood, James Johnston, Sam Mooney, Brychan Powell **JEAN WATSON**

CONDUCTORS.....LIEUT.-COL. J. M. DOYLE, GIUSEPPE MORELLI  
MONS. LICINIO REFICE, VILEM TAUSKY

PRODUCERS.....BRUNO NOFRI, POWELL LLOYD

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BOOKING OPENS AT THEATRE, 10 a.m. MONDAY, APRIL 19th

PRICES: Dress Circle, 15/-; Parterre, 10/-; Upper Circle, 5/6; Gallery, 2/6;  
Boxes, £3-0-0; £4-10-0; £6-0-0.

NO MATINEES

Performances Commence at 7.30 p.m.



# **INFORMATION**

**BOOKING OPENS MONDAY, APRIL 19th 1954, AT THE THEATRE 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.**  
**PRICES — Reserved : Boxes, £6-0-0, £4-10-0, £3-0-0; Dress Circle 15/-; Parterre, 10/-; Upper Circle, 5/6; Unreserved : Gallery, 2/6.**  
 Evening performances at 7.30 p.m. **SMOKING ABSOLUTELY FORBIDDEN** in the auditorium.  
 Patrons' Nights—Cecelia; Gala Night: May 12th.

FIRST WEEK		MONTH OF MAY 1954		THIRD WEEK		FOURTH WEEK	
MONDAY	3rd <b>CECELIA</b> Favati, Marini, Clabassi Forgiore, Frascati, La Porta Conductor: Refice	10th	<b>CECELIA</b> As on May 3	17th	<b>TOSCA</b> As on May 12	24th	<b>LA TRAVIATA</b> As on May 20
TUESDAY	4th <b>MADAME BUTTERFLY</b> Gigli, Sagon, Cavanagh, Dargavel, Flood, Mooney Conductor: Tausky	11th	<b>IL TROVATORE</b> Denise, Elliott, Dargavel Johnston, Mooney Conductor: Doyle	18th	<b>FORCE OF DESTINY</b> Mancini, Marini, Bardi, Clabassi, Forgione, La Porta Conductor: Morelli	25th	<b>FORCE OF DESTINY</b> As on May 18
WEDNESDAY	5th <b>CECELIA</b> As on May 3	12th	<b>TOSCA</b> Boi, Cavanagh, Clabassi, Gobbi, La Porta, Misciano Conductor: Morelli	19th	<b>TOSCA</b> Boi, Cavanagh, Clabassi, Silveri, La Porta, Misciano	26th	<b>LA TRAVIATA</b> As on May 20
THURSDAY	6th <b>MADAME BUTTERFLY</b> As on May 4	13th	<b>IL TROVATORE</b> Denise, Elliott, Dargavel, Powell, Mooney Conductor: Doyle <b>WATSON</b>	20th	<b>LA TRAVIATA</b> Gigli, Cavanagh, Clabassi, La Porta, Misciano, Silveri Conductor: Doyle	27th	<b>FORCE OF DESTINY</b> As on May 18
FRIDAY	7th <b>CECELIA</b> As on May 3	14th	<b>TOSCA</b> As on May 12	21st	<b>FORCE OF DESTINY</b> As on May 18	28th	<b>LA TRAVIATA</b> As on May 20
SAT. EVG.	8th <b>MADAME BUTTERFLY</b> As on May 4	15th	<b>IL TROVATORE</b> As on May 11 <b>JEAN WATSON</b>	22nd	<b>LA TRAVIATA</b> As on May 20	29th	<b>FORCE OF DESTINY</b> As on May 18

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**FOR YOUR  
CONVENIENCE  
IN  
BOOKING**

**CECELIA** ...  
**MADAME BUTTERFLY** ...  
**IL TROVATORE** ...  
**TOSCA** ...  
**FORCE OF DESTINY** ...  
**LA TRAVIATA** ...

... **FIRST WEEK** : Mon., Wed., Fri., May 3, 5, 7. **SECOND WEEK** : Mon., May 10.  
 ... **FIRST WEEK** : Tues., Thurs., Sat., May 4, 6, 8.  
 ... **SECOND WEEK** : Tues., Thurs., Sat., May 11, 13, 15.  
 ... **SECOND WEEK** : Wed., Fri., May 12, 14. **THIRD WEEK** : Mon., Wed., May 17, 19.  
 ... **Third Week** : Tues., Fri., May 18, 21. **Fourth Week** : Tues., Thurs., Sat., May 25, 27, 29.  
 ... **Third Week** : Thurs., Sat., May 20, 22. **Fourth Week** : Mon., Wed., Fri., May 24, 26, 28.



# RINA GIGLI AS "BUTTERFLY"

THE Dublin Grand Opera Society brought us back to bilingual opera at the Gaiety last night when Rina Gigli, daughter of the great tenor, sang the title role in "Madame Butterfly" through the medium of the original Italian, while the rest of the cast selected English.

The part makes exceptional demands upon the singer. It is only at odd moments that Butterfly is not on the stage, and everything that is said and done by everybody is primarily her concern. In no other opera is one character so entirely the object of the action; in no other opera does the success or failure of the performance depend so much upon one member of the cast.

## ACCURATE, SINCERE

It may be said that Rina Gigli measured up to her responsibilities. Her voice is not endowed with particular wealth of volume, and there were moments when tone was uncertain, but she sang on the whole with accuracy and sincerity. As an actress, she is in a class above that of most operatic performers; the childish simplicity in the first act, the eager anticipation in the second and the subsequent changes of emotional colouring, were painted with exceptionally vivid touches.

The none too rewarding part of the playboy Pinkerton was sung with easy assurances by James Johnston, who found nothing in it to tax his vocal powers very seriously, and the accomplished Bruce Dargavel came in once again with a most pleasing portrait of the kindly and worried consul.

The letter scene can hardly fail in the hands of artists in any way competent, but last night's Butterfly and Sharpless brought out all its poignancy and beauty of vocal line.

The faithful Susuki was played in a suitably self-effacing fashion by Betty Sagon, a very conscientious artist who has made a special reputation in this part, and the smaller roles were all in reliable hands. Joseph Flood, once again the Goro, maintains all his perfection of diction and movement. Sam Mooney was the angry Bonze, and Brendan Cavanagh made a dignified and resonant figure as the disappointed Yamadori. And poor Kate Pinkerton, who doesn't know where to look or what to do with herself, came to life (as far as the character permits) in the hands of Maureen Ryan.

Vilem Tausky conducted and traced effectively the magic pattern of the score, and the staging was extremely pretty. Production was by Powell Lloyd.

# GAIETY

7.30—ONCE NIGHTLY—7.30  
DUBLIN GRAND OPERA SOCIETY  
In Association with Radio Eireann  
presents

To-night, 7.30 p.m.

## IL TROVATORE

VICTORIA JAMES JEAN  
ELLIOTT JOHNSTON WATSON  
LATECOMERS NOT SEATED

— NEXT WEEK —

Mon. and Wed. .... TOSCA  
Tues. & Fri. .... FORCE OF DESTINY  
Thurs. and Sat. ... LA TRAVIATA

## D.G.O.S. SEASON AT THE GAIETY Fine Performance Of "Il Trovatore"

THE easy-to-remember music of Verdi's "Il Trovatore" is not at all easy to sing, making, as it does, extreme demands in range and power on soprano, tenor and baritone. In the Dublin Grand Opera Society's production at the Gaiety Theatre these exacting roles were in the hands of rather larynxes of Victoria Elliott, James Johnston and Bruce Dargavel.

James Johnston sang Manrico, the "Troubadour" of the title, with his usual richness and deceptive ease, hitting high C without apparent effort. Victoria Elliott was touching as the beset Leonora through whose joyful moments runs a vein of foreboding. Her dramatic voice can produce a lovely

mezza-voce which was effectively used in the final scene.

### CONVINCING SINGING

Bruce Dargavel gave a Count di Luna full of authority and dignity and was vocally at ease and secure all through. Gita Denise, an artiste of much temperament, was dramatic and convincing as Azucena, but her voice was hardly equal to the music and her intonation was too often precarious.

Sam Mooney's good diction was an advantage in the part of Ferrando whose words are important to the clarity of the tale and Bernadette Daly and Brendan Cavanagh did excellently in smaller parts.

Lieut.-Col. James Doyle conducted the Radio Eireann Symphony Orchestra which played with spirit and martial vigour. The colourful production was by Powell Lloyd.

M. MacG.



# Fine Quartet in 'Trovatore'

CONTINUING their opera season at the Gaiety Theatre, the Dublin Grand Opera Society last night presented "Il Trovatore." This old favourite, when played with fine artists, still provides a considerable musical experience. Its popularity is justified, for it has every desirable attribute: a plot with many dramatic situations and a stream of memorable melody.

A fine quartet of singers emerged in this production. James Johnston's excellent voice (always a joy to hear), enhanced Verdi's great arias, and his convincing acting raised the character of Manrico to its full stature.

Victoria Elliott portrayed Leonora with sincere and deep feeling. In "D'amor Sull Ali Rosee" her fine voice was always equal to the heavy demands Verdi puts upon the dramatic soprano.

Both Gita Denise and Bruce Dargavel were on an equal artistic level, vocally and dramatically. Miss Denise is possibly the best Azucena we have heard.

Sam Mooney, Bernadette Daly and Brendan Cavanagh excelled in smaller roles, and the chorus was a great and effective force.

Powell Lloyd's production had much to admire, and Lt. Col. J. M. Doyle, with the R.E. orchestra, gave a clear-cut rendering of Verdi's brilliant score.

R.J.

## OPERA ATTRACTED BIG AUDIENCE

It is extraordinary that, notwithstanding its complicated and almost impossible story, Verdi's opera "Il Trovatore" still, after a hundred years, continues to draw opera lovers, and, last night, true to tradition, one of the biggest audiences of the season was in the Gaiety Theatre, Dublin, to witness the Dublin Grand Opera Society's presentation of the old familiar piece.

The audience had its reward in a performance that, without reaching any particular brilliance, was uniformly of a high standard. The staging and settings were along the old, well-known lines, and the dressing much the same.

Sam Mooney did a good turn for the audience in telling with clarity of diction the reason for it all. He made an excellent vassal-in-chief to the Count. James Johnston is finding the music and role of Manrico more and more his metier. He sang with a fine manly urge, particularly in the intimate Chamber scene where "Di Quella Pira" was well declaimed.

Bruce Dargavel again impressed his hearers with his study of the Count di Luna, and Victoria Elliott took many of the honours of the night for her sympathetic playing of Leonora.

To-night — Tosca will be presented.

## "Il Trovatore" At The Gaiety

THERE was a freshness and sense of spontaneity about last night's production by Powell Lloyd of "Il Trovatore," by Dublin Grand Opera Society at the Gaiety.

Certainly Victoria Elliott's interpretation of the ill-fated Leonora was most convincing. Very sincere in her reading of the part Miss Elliott brought a gentle human element to the tragic figure. James Johnston's Manrico was a splendid interpretation both vocally and histrionically. The voice showed itself capable of the finest shades of musical expression and there was a firm resonant ring in the more ardent passages.

Gita Denise was the Azucena. She used her voice artistically on all occasions and was ably assisted by Bernadette Daly, as Inez.

### ORCHESTRAL FEATURE

The Count di Luna of Bruce Dargavel was excellent with a richness and fullness of voice that lent itself admirably to the musical colour of the part. Sam Mooney, Brendan Cavanagh and Gerrard Mooney acquitted themselves admirably in small parts. The chorus sang well, also.

Quite a feature of the performance was the precision and tonal blend that marked the playing by the Radio Eireann Symphony Orchestra (leader, Renzo Marchionni), conducted by Lieut.-Col. J. M. Doyle.



# **THIS** season the Dublin Grand Opera Society have brought together a number of very interesting people from many parts of the world to sing at the Gaiety Theatre.

Some of them, like August Seider, the Wagnerian tenor, have been professional singers all their lives; others, such as Roderick Jones, the Welsh tenor who started life as a miner, have moved into opera from other professions.

August Seider, who is well known all over Europe and in South America, sang Tristan here last year and is in "Fidelio" this year. Another German, Hans Maria Lins, is also singing in "Fidelio," has come to Ireland for the first time.

## **RADIO STAR**

Lins is a man of many parts. Besides being an opera singer, he has acted and dubbed roles in several films since the war made dozens of records of opera, dance music and jazz which have sold all over the world, and is one of the most celebrated radio singers in Munich.

His favourite songs are those of Schubert and Schumann, and, since he has a lyric baritone voice, he feels that he is better suited to the lighter German spiel opera than to the powerful grand opera.

## **FROM AUSTRALIA**

This is her first engagement on this side of the world for the Australian girl, Betty Fretwell, who was leading soprano in the National Opera Company of Australia before she left Melbourne a few months ago.

Last year was memorable for that company. They were chosen to give the Command Performance for Queen Elizabeth during the Royal tour, and they did "The Tales of Hoffmann," with Miss Fretwell in one of the leading roles.

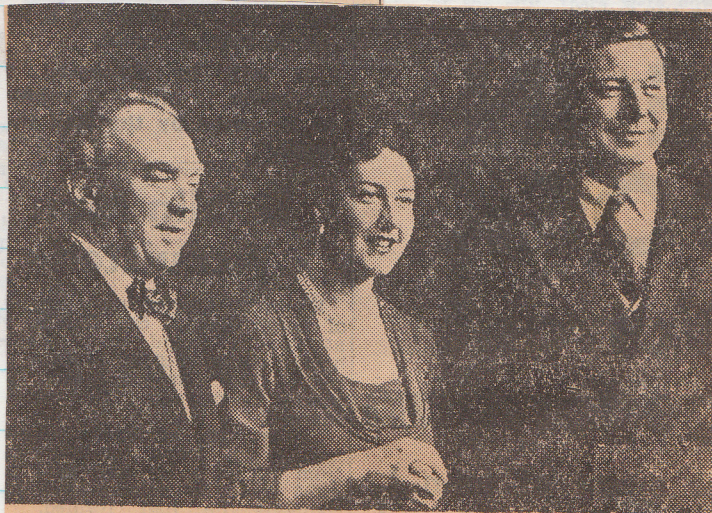
Besides that, they went on a

seven months' tour of Australia, bringing opera to lonely towns and villages, where nobody had ever seen live performances before. They had a tremendous reception in the most unexpected places, and Miss Fretwell believes that it was a sign of great change in Australia.

Roderick Jones, the baritone, is very anxious that more operas should be translated into and performed in Welsh, and this year, at the Eistedfodd, he sang in "Menna," the first opera ever translated into Welsh.

He has performed in the last four operas put on television, and is greatly in favour of television as a medium for opera. He has been in Dublin several times before.

When Kenneth Stevenson came out of the R.A.F. after the war he was introduced to Carl Rosa officials by a mutual friend. He joined the company and is now one of the best known younger singers in Britain.



Roderick Jones, Betty Fretwell and Kenneth Stevenson.





# THE DUBLIN GRAND OPERA SOCIETY

(cumann árd-óeolóráma áit cliait)

in association with

## RADIO EIREANN

with

## RADIO EIREANN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

at

# THE GAIETY THEATRE, DUBLIN

November 29th to December 21st, 1954

presents

**LA BOHEME**  
(PUCCINI)

**AIDA**  
(VERDI)

**CARMEN**  
(BIZET)

in English

GUEST ARTISTS—Veronica Dunne, Betty Fretwell, Josephine O'Hagan, Marianna Radev, Betty Sagon, Jean Watson, Paul Asciak, Brendan Cavanagh, ~~Enzo Dargavel~~, Joseph Flood, Bernard Hooton, Roderick, Jones, Ronald Lewis, Walter Midgley, **WILLIAM DICKIE** Brychan Powell, Kenneth Stevenson. **JESS WALTERS**

and

**FIDELIO**  
(BEETHOVEN)

**HANSEL and GRETEL**  
(HUMPERDINCK)

in German

GUEST ARTISTS — Antonia Fahberg, Gustav Fehn, Utho Graf, Hermann Kuhn, Karl Maria Lins, Hanna Muench, Esther Muehlbauer, Hans Hermann Nissen, Anton Seider.

CONDUCTORS...LIEUT. COL J. M. DOYLE, HANS GIERSTER, MILAN HORVAT

PRODUCERS...ANDRE ANDERSON, BRUNO VON NIESSEN, POWELL LLOYD

LEADER OF ORCHESTRA.....RENZO MARCHIONNI

CHOREOGRAPHY.....JUDY LARAMAN

DIRECTORS OF CHORUS.....LIEUT. FRED O'CALLAGHAN, JULIA GRAY,  
MAUREEN DILLON

BOOKING OPENS AT THEATRE, 10 a.m. MONDAY, 15th NOVEMBER

Prices of Admission: Dress Circle, 15/-; Parterre, 10/-; Upper Circle, 5/6;  
Gallery, 2/6; Boxes, £3; £4-10-0; £6.

Performances commence at 7.30 p.m.

GRAND OPERA BALL — GRESHAM HOTEL — NOV. 30th — Tickets at Hotel,  
or from any member.



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# INFORMATION

BOOKING OPENS MONDAY, 15th NOVEMBER, 1954, AT THE THEATRE, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.

PRICES—Reserved : Boxes, £6 ; £4-10-0 ; £3 ; Dress Circle, 15/- ; Parterre, 10/- ; Upper Circle, 5/6 ; Gallery (unreserved), 2/6.

Evening performances at 7.30 p.m. **SMOKING ABSOLUTELY FORBIDDEN** in the auditorium.

Patrons' Nights—Nov. 30th, Dec. 2nd, 7th and 9th. Gala Night, Dec. 14th.

★ NOTE—GRAND OPERA BALL at the GRESHAM HOTEL — NOV. 30th —TICKETS 17/6 from MEMBERS and GRESHAM HOTEL.

## MONTHS OF NOVEMBER/DECEMBER, 1954

	FIRST WEEK	SECOND WEEK	THIRD WEEK	FOURTH WEEK
MONDAY	29th <b>LA BOHEME</b> Dunne, Fretwell, Hooton, Jones, Midgley, Cavanagh, Flood, Stevenson Conductor : Doyle	6th <b>AIDA</b> Fretwell, Watson, Asiack, Hooton, Cavanagh, <del>Dargavel</del> , <b>DICKIE</b> Stevenson Conductor : Doyle	13th <b>HANSEL AND GRETEL</b> (as on Dec. 11)	<b>HANSEL AND GRETEL</b> (as on Dec. 11)
TUESDAY	30th <b>FIDELIO</b> Fahberg, Fehn, Kuhn, Lins, Muehlbauer, Nissen, Seider Conductor : Gierster	7th <b>FIDELIO</b> (as on Nov. 30)	14th <b>CARMEN</b> Dunne, O'Hagan, Radev, Sagon, Cavanagh, <del>Dargavel</del> , Flood, Hooton, <b>DICKIE</b> Powell, Stevenson Conductor : Horvat	21st <b>CARMEN</b> (as on Nov. 14) <b>JESSE WALTERS</b>
WEDNESDAY	1st <b>LA BOHEME</b> (as on Nov. 29)	8th <b>LA BOHEME</b> Dunne, Fretwell, Hooton, Lewis, Midgley, Stevenson, Cavanagh, Flood Conductor : Doyle	15th <b>HANSEL AND GRETEL</b> (as on Dec. 11)	
THURSDAY	2nd <b>FIDELIO</b> (as on Nov. 30)	9th <b>FIDELIO</b> (as on Nov. 30)	16th <b>CARMEN</b> (as on Nov. 14)	
FRIDAY	3rd <b>LA BOHEME</b> (as on Nov. 29)	10th <b>AIDA</b> Fretwell, Watson, Midgley, Hooton, <del>Dargavel</del> , Stevenson <b>DICKIE</b> Conductor : Doyle	17th <b>AIDA</b> (as on May 6)	
SATURDAY	4th <b>FIDELIO</b> (as on Nov. 30)	11th <b>HANSEL AND GRETEL</b> Fahberg, Graf, Muench, Nissen, Muehlbauer Conductor : Gierster	18th <b>CARMEN</b> (as on Nov. 14) <b>JESSE WALTERS</b>	

THE MANAGEMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO MAKE UNAVOIDABLE ALTERATIONS WITHOUT NOTICE.

FOR YOUR  
CONVENIENCE  
IN  
BOOKING

**LA BOHEME** ...  
**FIDELIO** ...  
**AIDA** ...  
**HANSEL AND GRETEL** ...  
**CARMEN** ...

...FIRST WEEK : Mon., Wed., Fri. SECOND WEEK : WEDNESDAY.  
...FIRST WEEK : Tues., Thurs., Saturday. SECOND WEEK : Tuesday, Thursday.  
...SECOND WEEK : Mon., Fri. THIRD WEEK : Friday.  
...SECOND WEEK : Sat. THIRD WEEK : Mon. and Wed. FOURTH WEEK : Mon.  
THIRD WEEK : Tues Thurs Sat FOURTH WEEK : Tuesday.



# GAIETY

7.30 — NIGHTLY — 7.30

DUBLIN GRAND OPERA SOCIETY

in association with Radio Eireann

PRESENTS

To-Night, Wednesday and Friday

## LA BOHEME

Veronica Dunne, Betty Pretwell

Walter Midgley

Brendan Hooton, Roderick Jones

Tues. Thurs. & Sat. — FIDELIO

## Opera Season Opens With Lively "Boheme"

★ OPENING nights of opera seasons are usually slow and sometimes tepid. "La Boheme," at the Gaiety last evening was an exception.

This Dublin Grand Opera Society presentation was lively and well-ordered. The Cafe Scene—the test one—went with a swing. Obviously the chorus had been thoroughly rehearsed.

### Ease

For Veronica Dunne it was a most successful evening. As Mimi she sang with exquisite ease, and encircled the role with much feeling.

Walter Midgley brought a brisk, business-like air to his portrayal of Rudolph that diminished the

romantic side, but the voice was firm and strong, although a hard quality was sometimes apparent.

### Glamour

There was a glamorous musetta in Betty Frewell—later on to be the season's Aida—with a voice of rich quality. Roderick Jones's Marcel remains unmatched; this is a splendid piece of acting.

Bernard Hooton (Schaunard) and Kenneth Stephenson (Colline) acted nicely but their voices did not carry over the volume of sound provided by the Radio Eireann Symphony Orchestra. Joseph Flood and Brendan Cavanagh filled their small roles with distinction.

The conductor was Lieut.-Col. J. M. Doyle and the director, Harry Powell-Lloyd.

Colline might be told not to place the bed so noticeably near the door in the last act—subjecting poor Mimi, dying of T.B. to the devil of a draught.

J. J. F.



# THE DUBLIN GRAND OPERA SOCIETY

(cumann árd-óeolóráma á t chlaí)

in association with

**RADIO EIREANN**

with

**RADIO EIREANN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**

at

**THE GAIETY THEATRE, DUBLIN**

presents

## A SEASON OF OPERA

WITH THE PRINCIPALS OF COVENT GARDEN & SADLERS WELLS

**28th NOVEMBER - 17th DECEMBER**

**MADAME BUTTERFLY**  
(PUCCINI)

**FAUST**  
(GOUNOD)

**LA BOHEME**  
(PUCCINI)

**CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA**  
(MASCAGNI)

**PAGLIACCI**  
(LEONCAVELLO)

### GUEST ARTISTES

**SOPRANOS:**—Amy Shuard, Veronica Dunne, Lenora Lafayette (Covent Garden), Joan Stuart (Sadlers Wells), Arda Mandikian (Glynbourne).

**CONTRALTOS:**—Patricia Johnson, Olwen Price (Sadlers Wells), Celine Murphy. **TENORS:**—Paul Asciak (Covent Garden and Malta), Antonio Annaloro (La Scala and Rome), Brycan Powell, Brendan Cavanagh, Joseph Flood.

**BARITONES:**—William Dickie (Glynbourne), William Edwards (Covent Garden and Welsh National Opera), Leo O'Brien.

**BASSES:**—Michael Langdon (Covent Garden), David Ward, Harold Blackburn (Sadlers Wells).

**CONDUCTORS** ..... BRYAN BALKWELL, LIEUT.-COL. J. M. DOYLE,  
MILAN HORVAT, STANFORD ROBINSON.

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**LEADER OF ORCHESTRA** ..... RENZO MARCHIONNI, MAX THONER

**DIRECTOR OF CHORUS** ..... JULIA GREY

**BOOKING OPENS AT BOOTH BROS., 15 South King Street, Wednesday,**  
December 16th, AT 10 a.m.

**Prices of Admission:** Boxes, £6, £4 10/-, £3; Dress Circle, 15/-; Parterre, 10/-;  
Upper Circle, 7/6, 6/-, 5/-.

**Performances commence at 7.30 p.m.**



BOOKING OPENS AT 10 a.m., WEDNESDAY, 16th NOVEMBER, AT BOOTH BROS., 15 SOUTH KING STREET.  
SMOKING IS NOT ALLOWED IN THE AUDITORIUM  
PATRONS' NIGHTS: November 29th, December 1st, 6th and 9th.

MONDAY	November 28th <b>FAUST</b> Dunne, Murphy, Powell Edwards, Langdon Conductor: Doyle	December 5th <b>CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA</b> <b>PAGLIACCI</b> Annaloro, Powell, Dickie, Dunne Edwards, Mandikian, Murphy, Cavanagh <i>PRICE</i> Conductor: Robinson	December 12th <i>FLOOD</i> <b>LA BOHEME</b> Dunne, Mandikian, Edwards <i>CRAIG</i> Blackburn <i>LEWIS</i> Conductor: Balkwell <i>GLOSSOP</i> <b>CAVANAGH</b>
TUESDAY	November 29th <i>O'BRIEN</i> <b>MADAME BUTTERFLY</b> Shuard, Dickie, Asciak Edwards, Johnson Conductor: Horvat <i>FLOOD</i>	December 6th <i>O'BRIEN</i> <b>MADAME BUTTERFLY</b> Lafayette, Dickie, Asciak Edwards, Johnson <i>PRICE</i> Conductor: Horvat <i>FLOOD</i>	December 13th <b>MADAME BUTTERFLY</b> Lafayette, Asciak, Dickie, Edwards <i>PRICE</i> Conductor: Horvat <i>FLOOD</i>
WEDNESDAY	November 30th <b>FAUST</b> (as on November 28th)	December 7th <b>FAUST</b> (as on November 28th)	December 14th <i>CAVANAGH</i> <b>CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA</b> <b>PAGLIACCI</b> <i>ASCIAK</i> Dunne, Mandikian, Murphy, Dickie, Edwards <i>HALLOWAY</i> <i>CON. DOYLE</i>
THURSDAY	December 1st <b>MADAME BUTTERFLY</b> (as on November 29th)	December 8th <b>CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA</b> <b>PAGLIACCI</b> (as on December 5th)	December 15th <i>LA BOHEME</i> Stuart, Mandikian, Edwards Blackburn <i>PRICE</i> Conductor: Balkwell <i>FLOOD</i> <i>SHARP</i> <i>PROBYN</i>
FRIDAY	December 2nd <b>CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA</b> <b>PAGLIACCI</b> Annaloro, Asciak, Dickie, Dunne Edwards, Mandikian, Murphy, Cavanagh <i>JOHNSON</i> Conductor: Robinson	December 9th <b>MADAME BUTTERFLY</b> (as on December 6th)	December 16th <b>CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA</b> <b>PAGLIACCI</b> (as on December 14th)
SATURDAY	December 3rd <b>FAUST</b> (as on November 28th)	December 10th <b>FAUST</b> Dunne, Murphy, Powell, Edwards, Ward Conductor: Doyle	December 17th <i>GLOSSOP</i> <b>LA BOHEME</b> (as on December 15th) <i>PROBYN</i> <i>PRICE</i> <i>REPLICATING</i> <i>GLOSSOP</i>

THE MANAGEMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO MAKE UNAVOIDABLE ALTERATIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE IN BOOKING {  
**FAUST** ... FIRST WEEK: Monday, Wednesday, Saturday. SECOND WEEK: Wednesday, Saturday.  
**CAVALLERIA & PAGLIACCI** FIRST WEEK: Friday. SECOND WEEK: Monday, Thursday. THIRD WEEK: Wed., Friday.  
**MADAME BUTTERFLY** FIRST WEEK: Tuesday, Thursday. SECOND WEEK: Tuesday, Fri. THIRD WEEK: Tuesday.  
**LA BOHEME** ... THIRD WEEK: Monday, Thursday and Saturday.

GAIETY THEATRE AND DUBLIN GRAND OPERA SOCIETY IN ASSOCIATION WITH RADIO EIREANN PRESENTS GALA OPENING OF THEATRE ON SATURDAY,  
 NOVEMBER 26th. CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA and PAGLIACCI. Annaloro—Asciak—Dunne—Mandikian—Murphy—Edwards—Dickie. *PRICE*  
 Conductor—Robinson. Producer—H. Powell-Lloyd.

Irish Printers Ltd.

"Cavalleria Rusticana"  
and "Faust"





# THE DUBLIN GRAND OPERA SOCIETY

(cumann árd-óeolóráma áit eúat)

in association with

## RADIO EIREANN

with

## RADIO EIREANN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

at

## THE GAIETY THEATRE, DUBLIN

presents

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TENORS:—Paul Asciak (Covent Garden and Malta), Antonio Annaloro (La Scala  
and Rome), Brycan Powell, Brendan Cavanagh, Joseph Flood. *CHARLES CRAIG*

BARITONES:—William Dickie (Glynbourne), William Edwards (Covent Garden  
and Welsh National Opera), Leo O'Brien. *JOHN PHOENIX*

BASSES:—Michael Langdon (Covent Garden), David Ward, Harold Blackburn  
(Sadlers Wells). *PETER O'CONNOR* *RONALD LEWIS*

CONDUCTORS ..... BRYAN BALKWELL, LIEUT.-COL. J. M. DOYLE,  
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BOOKING OPENS AT BOOTH BROS., 15 South King Street, Wednesday,

*Nov. December* 16th, AT 10 a.m.

Prices of Admission: Boxes, £6, £4 10/-, £3; Dress Circle, 15/-; Parterre, 10/-;

Upper Circle, 7/6, 6/-, 5/-.

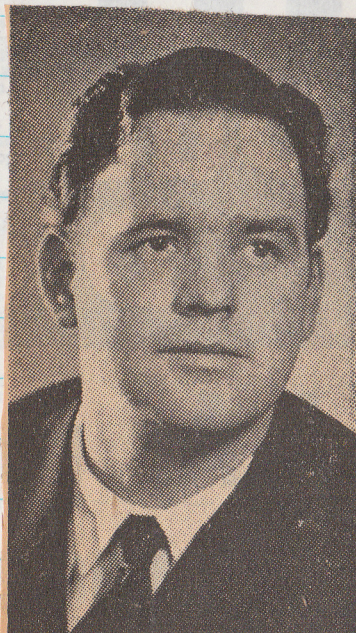
Performances commence at 7.30 p.m.



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N<sup>o</sup> 16th, AT 10 a.m.

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Upper Circle, 7/6, 6/-, 5/-.

Performances commence at 7.30 p.m.



Brychan Powell, the Welsh  
tenor, who will sing in  
"Cavalleria Rusticana"  
and "Faust"



THE first public performance in the rebuilt Gaiety Theatre, Dublin, on Saturday night, was the first night of the Dublin Grand Opera Society's winter season, starting with "I Pagliacci" and "Cavalleria Rusticana."

Whatever the purists may say, I am glad the D.G.O.S. presents its operas in the vernacular, and the Hamburg company's performance of "The Barber of Seville" settled that argument. But bilingual opera seems rather a large mouthful to swallow, and certainly, when one character sang in Italian it was a bit disconcerting. It was surprising, nevertheless, how quickly one accepted it with all the rest of the convention. Certainly, Antonio Annaloro in "I Pagliacci" could have sung in Eskimo for all I cared, as his was undoubtedly the finest singing in a good evening. He gave us his high spot, "Vesti la Giubba," with tremendous dramatic intensity.

Although her voice did not match Annaloro's in power, Veronica Dunne, as Nedda, gave a very good performance. She can act as well as she can sing and altogether she was excellent. I want to praise Brendan Cavanagh as Beppe; the clear quality of his voice and his smooth line were both very pleasing.

In "Cavalleria Rusticana" the outstanding performance was Amy Shuard as Santuzza. She has a magnificent voice, which she used spectacularly and yet musically, especially with the chorus in the Easter Hymn. Unfortunately, her acting is more limited than Veronica Dunne's and not nearly as good as Celine Murphy's, as

Lola. But then Santuzza is not really a nice girl, is she?

William Dickie alone appeared in both operas, as Tonio and Alfio. Even if he did not come out on top, his voice has so much flexibility and variety, while as for his quality as an actor, his different parts might have been played by different people.

The D.G.O.S. is very fortunate in having such a fine chorus, especially in the women's voices. The Radio Eireann Symphony Orchestra did a good job throughout, and came into its own with some wonderfully full-bodied string tone in the celebrated "Intermezzo."

It is extraordinary what a colourful evening of entertainment these old favourites produce in spite of their "crude realism and brutality." But one may wonder how much the audience would really enjoy these operas if their creator's intentions were carried out for us by setting and clothing them in "Liffey Lane."

C. A.

## Grand Opera Society Opens Season

### "Irish Independent" Music Critic

FOR the first performance of its opening season at the new Gaiety Theatre, the Dublin Grand Opera Society presented the Heavenly Twins of opera, Mascagni's "Cavalleria Rusticana" and Leoncavallo's "I Pagliacci," which have not been played here, for some time.

The Radio Eireann Symphony Orchestra was conducted by Stanford Robinson; and the producer was Powell Lloyd.

None of the voices in Pagliacci had quite the dramatic quality desirable for the expressive music and passionate plot; but Veronica Dunne sang and acted delightfully as Nedda. Her "death" was a tour-de-force.

Antonio Annaloro, singing in

Italian, was the Canio. His interpretation was full of temperament and feeling, and he gave an artistically restrained and moving performance of "On with the Motley." Brendan Cavanagh, reliable as always, made a convincing and intelligent study of Beppe.

In "Cavalleria Rusticana," Amy Shuard, as Santuzza, infused plenty of drama into her singing and acting. She might remember, however, when singing "Mother, you know the story" that while Mamma Lucia may know it, the audience may not, and try to make all her words intelligible. The only reason for singing Italian opera in English is to let an English-speaking audience know what is going on. William Dickie, the Alfio, scored here: his words were always clear.

Paul Asciak was a spirited Turiddu, and Celine Murphy was vocally charming, and historically credible, as Lola.

It is possible that this music is new to the chorus, but that is hardly adequate reason for its losing itself, and the orchestra and the conductor, so often in both operas.

**GAIEITY THEATRE**  
**TO-NIGHT at 7.30**  
**DUBLIN GRAND OPERA SOCIETY**  
In Association with Radio Eireann  
**CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA and**  
**PAGLIACCI**

with Antonio Annaloro, Paul Asciak,  
William Dickie, Veronica Dunne,  
William Edwards, Arda Mandikan.  
Conductor: Stanford Robinson.



# 'Cav.' And 'Pag.' At Gaiety

UNRESTRAINED enthusiasm greeted the first public performance in the reconstructed Gaiety on Saturday night, when the Dublin Grand Opera Society presented the favourite operatic 'twins,' "Cavalleria Rusticana" and "Pagliacci."

There was some confusion about the time of starting, which resulted in a lot of people arriving half an hour early—but they were thus enabled to explore the new Gaiety before the show began and give expression to their satisfaction at the tasteful and practical nature of the alterations.

"Cav" and "Pag" had not been done in Dublin for some ten years, though they have always provided a highly popular bill; no doubt the necessity of putting on a double cast of principals often proves a difficulty.

## PLUCKY PERFORMANCE

On Saturday, William Dickie appeared in the principal baritone part in each opera—an achievement which one does not remember to have witnessed before. It was plucky of Mr. Dickie to take on so much singing in one night, especially as some of it is exacting and exhausting.

These two operas are very like each other. They are about the same thing and are expressed in music that is temperamentally the same, though the composers do not display identical styles.

They are alike in the easy command of emotional expression and both have a certain rich eloquence in their moments of climax, though some would say that it is too facile.

There was a surprise when Mr. Dickie appeared in old-fashioned evening dress to sing the much-heard Prologue to "Pagliacci"—quite a tribute to the audience. After a fine start he proceeded to give a full-blooded rendering of the part of the villainous and spiteful clown.

★ PUTTING the operatic cart before the horse, "Pagliacci" was presented before "Cavalleria Rusticana," at the Gaiety, on Saturday night.

The change came momentarily as a surprise, but the reason for it was soon obvious. The opportunity given to the clown, Tonio, in "Pagliacci" to ring up the curtain on the new Gaiety's first public performance was too good to miss.

And so William Dickie, as Tonio (in conventional evening dress, with opera hat and cloak) came before the curtain to tell us in the Prologue that stage players are people of flesh and blood like ourselves.



The curtain rose on a stage rather uncomfortably packed with dozens of Calabrian peasants (the scenery encroached too much, giving insufficient room for movement). The chorus of welcome for the strolling players was, in consequence, rough and unsure.

However, the entry of the Players improved matters. Antonio Annaloro, singing in Italian (the remainder of the cast sang in English) made a blanched, anguished figure of Canio, pouring out his heart in a well-managed although not over-strong tenor.

Veronica Dunne, who portrayed Nedda, has gained greatly in poise and stage presence, sang beautifully and took her physical punishment heroically. William Edwards was a solid Silvio. William Dickie made Tonio resemble in gait the villainous Danny Mann in "The Colleen Bawn."

"Cavalleria Rusticana" brought



Amy Shuard.

a highly-dramatic interpretation of the part of the unhappy Santuzza from Amy Shuard, a reading which, for its Mediterranean flavour, got surprisingly little support from the other principals.

Paul Asciak sang strongly as Turridu, but hardly cut the passionate, romantic figure two women would quarrel over. Celine Murphy was a pert Lola.

The chorus work in this second opera was a distinct improvement on the first, but some of the off-stage voices in the Easter Hymn were not in unison.

The conductor was Stanford Robinson. The Radio Eireann Symphony Orchestra had its best moments in "Cavalleria Rusticana." Production by Powell Lloyd.

J. J. F.

## TOUCHING SINCERITY

The pathetic Nedda was sung with touching sincerity by Veronica Dunne and she acted with great effect in the closing scenes—a considerable test of a soprano's dramatic powers.

Antonio Annaloro, singing in Italian, put power and passion into the hot-headed and reckless Canio, and Brendan Cavanagh sang Beppe's delightful serenade as well as anyone could wish it sung. The thankless part of Silvio found a useful interpreter in William Edwards.

In "Cav." the laurels went to Amy Shuard, whose singing of the tragic Santuzza revealed a voice of range and power. In gesture and facial expression she gave telling point to the part. William Dickie's Alfio was robust enough, and Paul Asciak gave the proper bounce and brutality to the rash Turridu.

The village vamp, Lola, was adequately rendered by Celine Murphy and Olwen Price completed the cast as the distressed mother.

In both operas choral work was reasonably good though not always confident and accurate. Stanford Robinson conducted and Powell Lloyd produced. Tonight: "Faust."



ONE of the standard pot-boilers of the repertoire, Gounod's "Faust," was the second presentation of the Dublin Grand Opera Society's season at the Gaiety last night. It did

not, on the whole, come up to expectations in view of the high standards expected of the Society. The staging had a melancholy air throughout.

The settings had a gaunt Gothic aspect, the stage seemed to have been bisected and a half light shone upon the proceedings all the time. Even when the soldiers came back from the wars and sang their rousing chorus they were suffused in a "dim religious light."

Marguerite's garden was more like a churchyard than a private residence's approach and the church interior was as bare and forbidding as a prison cell. If there is any opera that does not accord well with this "sophisticated" approach it is this old-fashioned, ingenuous and unashamedly tuneful "Faust."

#### RESOUNDING BASS

In view of their surroundings, the principals could hardly be blamed if they failed to give of their best, but it may be said at once that the Mephistopheles of Michael Langdon was a fully realised character.

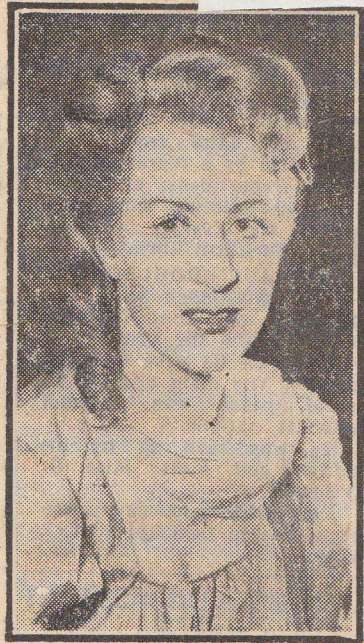
A resounding bass voice, excellent diction and a marked talent for the sinister laugh were all in his equipment; and a brilliantly sneering rendering of the serenade was about the best thing of the evening.

Both Bryan Powell (Faust) and Veronica Dunne (Marguerite) seemed to be ill at ease and William Edwards was a colourless if vocally adequate Valentine. Celine Murphy, as the faithful Siebel, was confident and clearly has capabilities as an operatic artist, but allowed herself some unauthorised touches in both words and music.

Leo O'Brien (Wagner) and Anne Bishop (Martha) did their small parts well. The chorus was handicapped by the peculiar stage arrangements but contrived to sing pleasantly nevertheless. The four dancers needed more rehearsal.

Lt.-Col. Doyle conducted an orchestra that was too often too loud for the singers. Production was by Powell Lloyd.

To-night—"Madam Butterfly."



VERONICA DUNNE

## Artistic blend was achieved in 'Faust'

THE President and Mrs. O'Kelly were among a distinguished audience at the Gaiety Theatre last night for the Dublin Grand Opera Society's production of "Faust." This is the opera of the man in the street, and, as has been said of "Hamlet," it is "full of quotations," and tuneful ones at that.

By the time all the principal singers had appeared it was a trifle disappointing. One thought at first that there was among them no really outstanding voice, and that the chorus and orchestra were not quite on the best terms rhythmically. As with the two previous productions, the opera improved as time went on, and in the last act a really artistic blend had been achieved.

Michael Langdon, as Mephistopheles, was outstanding. Veronica Dunne, as Marguerite, sang with flawless control and great distinction of phrasing, and employed her beautiful voice to the very best advantage. Her last Act was deeply moving. Celine Murphy was Siebel, and sang and acted with staunchness and sincerity—a valuable acquisition to the Dublin Grand Opera Society. Brychan Powell and William Edwards, as Faust and Valentine, did their best vocally and histrionically, as did the rest of the cast.

Production will need revision. Lt.-Col. J. M. Doyle conducted, and the R.E. Orchestra provided some fine playing, if at times a little loud for the comfort of the stage.

R. J.

**GAIETY** Nightly 7.30  
DUBLIN GRAND OPERA SOCIETY  
in association with RADIO EIREANN  
presents  
**TO-NIGHT, WED. and SAT.**  
**FAUST**  
VERONICA DUNNE, BYRCAN POWELL, MICHAEL LANGDON  
Conductor: Lt.-Col. J. M. DOYLE  
**TUESDAY and THURSDAY**  
**MADAME BUTTERFLY**  
Fri.: CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA  
and PAGLIACCI



# DUBLIN SOCIETY PRESENTS "FAUST"

"Irish Independent" Music Critic

THE Dublin Grand Opera Society's second offering in its current season in the Gaiety Theatre, Dublin, was "Faust," with the Radio Eireann Symphony Orchestra conducted by Lieut.-Col. J. M. Doyle.

This was a production in which the lavish touch was wanting. One not very impressive set was used to represent, regardless of suitability, the six different locales in which the events of the opera take place. Marguerite in the Jewel Song had an invisible mirror, and imagined herself transformed into a noble lady by one string of pearls.

Siebel's bouquet was composed of a few nondescript blooms; the garden did not boast of even a blade of grass, and the whole opera was played in a dull light which lowered to dimness on any provocation and cast unbecoming shadows on the singers.

Michael Langdon's performance

as Mephistopheles was the best of the night. Using his strong voice to good effect, he characterised the diabolic emissary very well, making him an impressive figure even in his comic moments.

## DRAMATIC SINGING

Veronica Dunne, an un-Germanic Marguerite with dark hair, seemed to be saving her voice in the first two Acts, but sang dramatically in the church scene. Bryan Powell was a very unpolished Faust and William Edwards was an adequate Valentine.

Celine Murphy, who sang Siebel, has a fine voice, but she should not make such mistakes in the words as seem to indicate that she does not understand the meaning of her aria, and she should not change the words in order to make high notes easier. An aspiring opera singer should be able to sing the word "sweet" on a not very high note without difficulty.

The women of the chorus looked well in their attractive costumes, though their up-to-the-minute hair-dressing struck an incongruous note. It is surely not beyond the ingenuity of the Society to fashion a few stage plaits or ringlets.

## D.G.O.S. IN "FAUST" AT THE GAIETY

After their brilliant start on Saturday night, last night's production of "Faust" by the Dublin Grand Opera Society at the Gaiety Theatre was something of a disappointment. I understand that the Society had to meet an emergency and that the soloists sang at short notice.

But on a night when the President was attending in state, this does not excuse, surely, the faults of production, stage management, orchestral playing and of the chorus, that occurred last night. Only the gravest emergency should allow an audience to hear, rising over three singers and an orchestra, all *fortissimo*, the shout: "Lift that flat!"

The stage décor, also, was a curious and unpleasant mixture of pantomime, realism and expressionism. Whatever arguments may rage about the music of grand opera, it must always be a spectacle. And let me throw a final brick at the carelessness of the lighting.

Having got all that off my chest let me now pay tribute to three of the soloists. As Mephistopheles, Michael Langdon's commanding presence and voice dominated the stage in every way. Alone of the cast he was able to surmount the loudness of the orchestra.

In the part of Marguerite, Veronica Dunne sang pleasantly. Her voice is melodious and always in tune, even if it was not powerful enough in the circumstances. In the small and unsatisfactory part of Siebel, Celine Murphy gave excellent support, and again showed herself as a good actor.

As the Gaiety has so successfully retained the charm of the 19th century, should one approve of another relic of the period, namely the drowning of grand opera singers under the rustle of chocolate papers?

C. A.

# "Faust" Presented at the Gaiety

★ WITH the President and Mrs. O'Kelly in attendance the Dublin Grand Opera Society season proper got under way at the Gaiety last night with a presentation of Gounod's "Faust."

There was some excellent singing and acting, but it could not be denied that the Society has had more successful productions of the opera than this.

Pace was slow so the power and intensity of the tragic story did not make their full impact. Missed lighting cues, weak dancing, a flowerless garden and attempts at symbolism that did not come off were all things that pulled down the performance.

Real compensations, however,

were a magnificent Mephistopheles by Michael Langdon, who sang with a dark, menacing, voice and acted with excellent authority, a lovely interpretation of Marguerite by Veronica Dunne, featuring flawless singing and charming and sensitive acting, and a very attractive Siebel from Celine Murphy.

Bryan Powell was a cautious Faust in the acting and rather passionless vocally. The chorus gave a very good account of themselves.

The Radio Eireann Symphony Orchestra, under Lieut.-Col. J. M. Doyle, played with taste and assurance.

Direction and production was by Powell Lloyd.

B. Q.



THE D.G.O.S. have at last — thank heaven! — pulled themselves together and saved their opera season at the Gaiety. Their *Madame Butterfly*, expertly and efficiently produced by Ande Anderson, is one of their best things so far.

Most of the evening's success was due to the fact that the wretched D.G.O.S. chorus could be got rid of early in the first act, leaving the stage clear for a team of artists who know their job and their responsibilities to an audience.

So it's cheers then—and cheers again! — for Amy Shuard's *Butterfly*, an excellent performance that grew in dramatic power to a really moving climax. It seems incredible that this was the same soprano who, as Santuzza, shamelessly tore a theatrical passion to shreds the other evening.

## Telling details

Not less warm must be our admiration of William Dickie's Sharpless, an immaculate reading with a score of telling details finely etched in. Our respect for this most capable artist soars with each of his roles.

Pinkerton was sung by Paul Asciak, whose obvious sincerity triumphs over rather stilted acting to capture our sympathy. Patricia Johnston's Susuki was an awkward part extremely well played. Her Act 2 duet with

*Butterfly* was one of the delights of the evening.

As for Milan Horvat and the R.E. Orchestra, it's simply a case of hats off, gentlemen. In Act I the playing, by comparison with that of the three previous operas, was resplendent, but in the latter part of the evening conductor and orchestra surpassed themselves.

The mantle of genius was undoubtedly around Horvat's shoulders last night. I came away convinced that he is our greatest musical asset.

## "BUTTERFLY"

From the moment the curtain rose on the Dublin Grand Opera Society's production of "*Madame Butterfly*" last night in the Gaiety, it was obvious that designer, producer and stage staff were making up for the mess of Monday's "*Faust*."

Until half-way through the first part of act II I thought Amy Shuard, as *Butterfly*, was not going to come up to the part. That all her acting ability is in her voice seemed against her, and the same limited gestures to express joy and despair were very tiring. But from then on to the end her perform-

# TO-NIGHT AT 7.30 DUBLIN GRAND OPERA SOCIETY in Association with Radio Eireann presents MADAME BUTTERFLY

"A SUPERB PRODUCTION"  
—Irish Press.

With—  
AMY SHUARD, WILLIAM DICKIE,  
PAUL ASCIAK, PATRICIA JOHNSTON.  
Conductor—MILAN HORVAT

## AT THE GAIETY

ance grew to greatness. Throughout the whole of the second part of act II she held the audience with sustained emotional power in a portrayal of high tragedy.

Up to that the stage had belonged to William Dickie as Sharpless. He had already shown himself a versatile actor in "*I Pagliacci*" last Saturday. Last night he revealed himself as a fine singer, every one of whose words was clear, and a remarkable actor. He has the rare ability to time all his movements so that singing seems the natural vehicle of language. He can also stand in silence on the stage and listen — and not too many straight actors can do that.

Patricia Johnston, as Susuki, has a warm and varied voice, and gave *Madame Butterfly* the continued support demanded of her. On the other hand, Paul Asciak (Pinkerton) is such a poor actor that the fine quality of his voice almost fails to come across.

Though Puccini's explorations of the exotic in melody and harmony never remove his music from his country and his period, as pure music it is a great deal more interesting than the music of most standard operas, and it thus provides a rewarding part for the orchestra. Milan Horvat was able to get the best from the stage, and the Radio Eireann Symphony Orchestra gave some very lovely playing, both accompanying the voices and in the purely orchestral passages.

C. A.

# PUCCINI OPERA FINELY SUNG

★ Puccini's "*Madame Butterfly*" was given a very satisfactory performance at the Gaiety last night by the Dublin Grand Opera Society

In title role was Amy Shuard, who gave a superb interpretation. She sang exquisitely and acted with rare preception and delicacy. This was one of the best "*Madame Butterflies*" Dublin has seen.

She was supported by a very assured characterisation of Sharpless by William Dickie and a well thought out Susuki from Patricia Johnston.

The Pinkerton of Paul Asciak did

not altogether impress as one likely to win the heart of a pretty Japanese girl, though he sang well at times.

Production by Ande Anderson was finely controlled with proper attention being paid to details such as lighting.

A special word of praise must go to Milan Horvat and the Radio Eireann Symphony Orchestra. The conductor gave the singers a splendid accompaniment, and in the great moments of the opera got really telling playing from his orchestra.

B.Q.:



**W**HEN some four years ago Amy Shuard took the title role in "Madame Butterfly" at the Gaiety, she had with her a Dutch tenor singing in Italian and a Polish baritone singing in broken English! There were no such heavy international complications at last night's production by the Dublin Grand Opera Society; it was the tenor this time whose English was clearly not native, which was not surprising seeing that Paul Asciak is from Malta.

But that was all. Miss Shuard and the rest of the cast sang clear, easily heard English. One of the many pleasures of the night, indeed, was the intelligibility of the words (apart from Mr. Asciak, who may be excused). Taking it all round, this performance was one of the most satisfying that the Society has given us for a long time of Puccini's immortal experiment with love-life in Japan.

#### RIGHT TO THE HEART

It is not generally recognised, perhaps, how much the opera depends upon Butterfly herself. Everything centres around her; she is singing of her Pinkerton for virtually the entire length of the action and during the short periods when she is not on stage the composer misers her and the music loses its inspiration.

Miss Shuard did justice to this great part. Her voice, rich and sensitive, has both power and pathos, and her acting throughout had that clear suggestion of the tragic that can lift Butterfly from

the category of the sentimental schoolgirl into the realm of "noble womanhood."

Pinkerton is always a thankless part, and a difficult one to put over. Mr. Asciak has plenty of admirable notes in his equipment and when he discovers how to stroll around nonchalantly and adopt easy stances—things that tenors find it hard to do especially when they are Pinkertons—he will be more than very good in this rôle role.

#### POSTCARD BEAUTY

William Dickie was the kind and embarrassed Consul; in the famous letter duet, the most genuinely poignant thing Puccini wrote, he joined with Miss Shuard in a scene that went right to the heart.

The faithful Susuki, operatic exemplar of Man Friday, was in



**AMY SHUARD**

"noble womanhood"

Patricia Johnston's hands appropriately self-effacing, but gave all the necessary support in singing and acting to her Butterfly. The smaller parts fitted into the whole very well, and it was nice to see poor Kate Pinkerton looking so attractive, for which we must thank Monica Condron.

The setting for the first act had a bright, picture postcard beauty that was a welcome change after the semi-darkness and gloom of "Faust" the previous night. The orchestra rendered the delicate tracery of the score exquisitely under Milan Horvat and production was by Ande Anderson

## Superb 'Madame Butterfly' at the Gaiety

**P**UCCINI'S "Madame Butterfly" was given a superb production last night at the Gaiety Theatre by the Dublin Grand Opera Society.

Amy Shuard in the title role served Puccini nobly. The character of Butterfly is a complex one, but she encompassed the wide range of emotional intensity and sang with the kind of beauty which holds one's attention.

There is a simplicity in this wonderful production by Ande Anderson that is entirely appropriate. Attention is rightly focussed upon Cho-Cho-San, and we are free to follow the moving story of her ill-fated love, and confirm our dislike of Pinkerton (played reasonably well by Paul Asciak).

Patricia Johnson is a most devoted and not too fussy Susuki, and William Dickie succeeds admirably in his playing of Sharpless. Highlight of the show, however, is the wonderful playing of the R.E. Symphony Orchestra under Milan Horvat.

**VERDICT:** Best production to date and a credit to all concerned.

R.J.



# Dublin Opera Society In "Madame Butterfly"

"Irish Independent" Music Critic

**T**HE emotional appeal and subtle theatrical effectiveness of Madame Butterfly survives any number of hearings and almost any type of performance.

The useless faith and courage of the forsaken Go-Go-San clinging vainly to her fool's paradise are translated into the melting and poignant phrases of Puccini's music to go straight to the heart every time the opera is sung.

The Dublin Grand Opera Society's production at the Gaiety Theatre was no exception to this rule, and it had the extra advantage of an exceptionally fine Butterfly in Amy Shuard.

Her singing was excellent, she uses a flexible and brilliant voice with considerable skill and her performance was at once artistic and dramatically convincing.

The first scene of Act II, where the Consul tries to break the news of

Pinkerton's marriage, was particularly moving, and William Dickie, singing well, was a sympathetic Consul.

Paul Asciak seemed unfamiliar with the part of Pinkerton and his concentration on the conductor robbed his interpretation of spontaneity and ease. Patricia Johnson was an unusually graceful Suzuki, and Joseph Flood, William Edwards and Leo O'Brien filled the smaller parts.

It was pleasant to see Kate Pinkerton, sung by Monica Condon, elegantly dressed at last, though her charming confection was slightly marred by anachronistic wedge heels.

## EXCELLENT PLAYING

The orchestra gave us some excellent playing, and Milan Horvat directed the performance with authority and skill. Keeping an excellent balance between orchestra and stage, and skilfully holding the ensemble together when, as occasionally happened, the singers became unsettled.

Ande Anderson's intelligent production and several clever touches and a few that were, a rarer quality, sensible.





# The Dublin Grand Opera Society

Cumann Áirí-Geotóráma áé Cliaé)

in association with

## Radio Eireann

with

### RADIO EIREANN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

November 26th to December 15th, 1956

#### GUEST ARTISTS

NANCY CREIGHTON  
ANNE EDWARDS  
MARGARET ELKINS  
VICTORIA ELLIOTT  
JOAN HAMMOND  
CELINE MURPHY  
WILLIAM AIKEN

DONALD CAMPBELL  
BRENDAN CAVANAGH  
EDWIN FITZGIBBON  
JOSEPH FLOOD  
PETER FORBES-ROBERTSON  
HOWELL GLYNNE  
JAMES JOHNSTON  
RODERICK JONES  
WALTER KANE  
RONALD LEWIS  
FREDERICK SHARP  
TILLA BRIEM  
PAULA BRIVKALNE  
TRUDE ROESLER  
ANNIE STUDENT  
ELFRIEDE WASSERTHAL  
DR. KÁRL BAUER  
HERBERT FLIETNER  
WILLI FRIEDRICH  
JULIUS JULLICH  
XAVIER WAIBEL  
GUNTHER TREPTOW  
LOUIS de VOS

## GAIETY THEATRE

DUBLIN  
PRESENTS

### TOSCA (Puccini)

### CARMEN (Bizet)

### SIMON BOCCANEGRA (Verdi)

ABOVE IN ENGLISH

Productions, Decor and principal singers from the  
MUNICIPAL OPERA HOUSE, ESSEN

### WALKÜRE (Wagner) IDOMENEO (Mozart)

IN GERMAN

Conductors: Paul Belker, Lieut.-Col. J. M. Doyle, Gustav König, Charles MacKerras, Emmanuel Young.

Leaders of Orchestra: Renzo Marchionni, Arthur Nachstern.  
Intendant, Essen: Dr. Karl Bauer.

Chief Producer: Dr. Hans Hartleb Werner Wiekenberg.  
Chief Designer: Alfred Siercke.

Directors of Chorus: Lieut. Fred O'Callaghan, Julia Gray.

BOOKING OPENS AT THEATRE, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.  
TUESDAY, 13th NOVEMBER, 1956

PRICES: Dress Circle 15/- (Boxes pro rata); Parterre 10/6;  
Grand Circle 9/- (Boxes pro rata), and 5/-.

Performances commence at 7.30 p.m. except WALKÜRE  
which will commence at 7 p.m. sharp.

Choreography: Judy Larraman (Covent Garden).

Dancers: Judy Larraman, Celia White, Costa Savides.



WINTER 1956

Opera Society  
Madame Butterfly

# INFORMATION

BOOKING OPENS TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 13th, AT THE THEATRE, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.  
 PRICES: DRESS CIRCLE 15/- (Seats in Dress Circle Boxes 15/-); PARTERRE 10/6; GRAND CIRCLE 9/- (Seats in Grand Circle Boxes 9/-), and 5/-.  
 PERFORMANCES COMMENCE AT 7.30 p.m., EXCEPT WALKURE WHICH COMMENCES AT 7 p.m.  
 SMOKING IN THE AUDITORIUM IS FORBIDDEN.  
 PATRONS' NIGHTS — SIMON BOCCANEGRA.  
 GALA NIGHT — WALKURE, DECEMBER 3rd, FORMAL DRESS.

	FIRST WEEK	SECOND WEEK	THIRD WEEK
MONDAY	November 26th <b>TOSCA</b> Hammond, Johnston, Lewis, Glynne Conductor : Young	December 3rd <b>WALKURE</b> Essen Municipal Opera Conductor : Belker	December 10th <b>BOCCANEGRA</b> As on December 5th
TUESDAY	November 27th <b>WALKURE</b> Essen Municipal Opera Conductor : Konig	December 4th <b>IDOMENEO</b> Essen Municipal Opera Conductor : Belker	December 11th <b>CARMEN</b> As on December 6th
WEDNESDAY	November 28th <b>TOSCA</b> As on November 26th	December 5th <b>BOCCANEGRA</b> Elliott, Cavanagh, Johnston, Jones, Glynne Conductor : MacKerras	December 12th <b>BOCCANEGRA</b> As on December 5th
THURSDAY	November 29th <b>IDOMENEO</b> Essen Municipal Opera	December 6th <b>CARMEN</b> Elkins, Sharp, Creighton, Edwards, Murphy, Aiken, Campbell, Lewis Conductor : Doyle	December 13th <b>IDOMENEO</b> Essen Municipal Opera Conductor : Konig
FRIDAY	November 30th <b>WALKURE</b> As on November 27th Conductor : Belker.	December 7th <b>BOCCANEGRA</b> As on December 5th	December 14th <b>WALKURE</b> Essen Municipal Opera Conductor : Konig
SATURDAY	December 1st <b>TOSCA</b> As on November 26th	December 8th <b>CARMEN</b> As on December 6th	December 15th <b>IDOMENEO</b> Essen Municipal Opera Conductor : Konig



WINTER 1957

Dublin Grand Opera Society

Association with

Radio Eireann

SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

15th, 1956

CAIETY THEATRE

DUBLIN

PRESENTS

CARMEN

SIMON BOCCANEGRA

## AUSTRALIAN SINGER FOR DUBLIN OPERA

By MARY MacGORIS

### "Irish Independent" Music Critic

Patricia Bartlett, the Australian soprano, who is one of the principals in Sadlers' Wells, London, will sing the role of Marguerite in to-night's opening production of Gounod's "Faust" at the Gaiety Theatre, Dublin, presented by the Dublin Grand Opera Society.

Miss Bartlett replaces Anne Bollinger, who was to have sung this role. Miss Bollinger is still suffering from the attack of 'flu which prevented her from singing Antonia in "The Tales of Hoffmann," the opening production of the Society's season, on Monday last. On that occasion the part was taken over, at short notice and with much success, by the Irish soprano, Veronica Dunne.

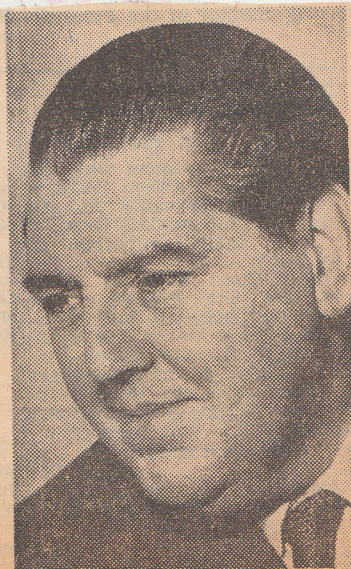
THE Dublin Grand Opera Society takes over the Gaiety Theatre on Monday for a three week's season. The operas to be performed will be sung in English.

The season may well be the means of winning new fans to opera, especially as many well-known opera stars from England will be taking part.

One of these is Howell Glynnne, the Welsh bass. He started his career with the Carl Rosa, and after only six weeks in the chorus was promoted to play the part of Sparafucile in "Rigoletto".

He became the principal bass with the Sadlers Wells Opera Company, and sings both there and with the Covent Garden Company. When the King of Sweden was in England, he decorated him with the "Order of the North Star" for his services to music. He will be heard as Mephistopheles in "Faust".

The operas to be performed include "Tales of Hoffmann", "Turandot", "Faust", "La Boheme" and "Marriage of Figaro".



Welsh operatic bass Howell Glynnne



# INFORMATION

BOOKING OPENS TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 5, AT THE THEATRE, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.  
PRICES: DRESS CIRCLE 15/- (Seats in Dress Circle Boxes 15/-); PARTERRE 10/6;

GRAND CIRCLE 9/- (Seats in Grand Circle Boxes 9/-), and 5/-.

PERFORMANCES COMMENCE AT 7.45 p.m.

SMOKING IN THE AUDITORIUM IS FORBIDDEN.

GALA NIGHT — LA BOHEME, FRIDAY, 6th DECEMBER.

## FIRST WEEK

Monday,	Nov. 25	HOFFMANN: Howitt, Nisbett, Barker, <del>Reid</del> <b>DUNNE</b> , Sinclair, <del>Johnston</del> <b>HERINCX</b> , Kevin Miller, <b>E-EVANS</b> , Niven Miller, Cavanagh, Dempsey <b>DANLAW</b> , Gellhorn
Tuesday	„ 26	TURANDOT: Fisher, Rust, Midgley, Nowakowski, Powell, Niven Miller, Kevin Miller Gellhorn <b>EVANS</b>
Wednesday	„ 27	FAUST: <del>Bollinger</del> Nisbett, Midgley, Nowakowski <b>EVANS BARTLETT</b> Doyle
Thursday	„ 28	TURANDOT: As before, except Edgar Evans replaces Midgley Gellhorn
Friday	„ 29	FAUST: As before Doyle
Saturday	„ 30	HOFFMANN: As before <b>RYCHAN POWELL</b> <b>SANG HOFFMAN</b> Gellhorn

## SECOND WEEK

Monday,	Dec. 2	TURANDOT. As November 26 <b>MARIA KINAS IN PLACE OF FISHER</b> <b>NIVEN</b> Gellhorn
Tuesday	„ 3	LA BOHEME: Leigh, Rust, Miller, McAlpine, Pease, Cavanagh. <b>HAYK WELL</b> Braithwaite
Wednesday	„ 4	FAUST: As November 27 Doyle
Thursday	„ 5	MARRIAGE OF FIGARO: Leigh, Bollinger, Howitt, Kern, Nisbett, Pease, Geraint Evans, Glynne, Kevin Miller Balkwill
Friday	„ 6	LA BOHEME: As before Braithwaite
Saturday	„ 7	MARRIAGE OF FIGARO: As before Balkwill

## THIRD WEEK

Monday	Dec. 9	HOFFMANN: As before Gellhorn
Tuesday	„ 10	MARRIAGE OF FIGARO: As before, Herincx replaces Evans Balkwill
Wednesday	„ 11	LA BOHEME: As before Braithwaite
Thursday	„ 12	TURANDOT: As November 26 Gellhorn
Friday	„ 13	FAUST: As November 27 Doyle
Saturday	„ 14	HOFFMANN: As before Gellhorn

The Management reserves the right to make unavoidable alterations without notice.

HOFFMAN. TURANDOT PRODUCED BY A. ANDERSON

FAUST PRODUCED BY J. COPLEY

LA BOHEME PRODUCED BY CHRISTOPHER WEST

THE Dublin Society takes Theatre on Monday week's season. The performed will be means of winning opera, especially known opera star will be taking part. One of these is the Welsh bass career with the after only six weeks was promoted to Sparafucile in He became the with the Sadie Company, and and with the Company. When Sweden was in England, he decorated him with the "Order of the North Star" for his services to music. He will be heard as Menistophiles in "Faust". The operas to be performed include "Faust", "Turandot", "La Boheme", and "Marriage of Figaro".

## ITALIAN SINGER

UBLIN OPERA MARY MACGORIS "Independent" Music Critic "The Australian" is still in the attack of flu and has been singing "The Tales of Hoffmann" production of opening production of "Faust" at the Gaiety Theatre, Dublin, presented by the Dublin Opera Society. Anne replaces. Anne to was to have sung as Bollinger is still in the attack of flu and has been singing "The Tales of Hoffmann" production of opening production of "Faust" at the Gaiety Theatre, Dublin, presented by the Dublin Opera Society. Anne replaces. Anne to was to have sung as Bollinger is still in the attack of flu and has been singing "The Tales of Hoffmann" production of opening production of "Faust" at the Gaiety Theatre, Dublin, presented by the Dublin Opera Society.

Welsh operatic bass Howell Glynne

WINTER 1954



# GAIETY THEATRE, DUBLIN

25th November to 14th December, 1957

## The Dublin Grand Opera Society

Cumann Ápro Ceól-Opáma at Cliaí



in association with

### Radio Éireann

presents in English

#### Guest Artists

~~VERONICA JONES~~  
BRENDAN CAVANAGH  
MARTIN DEMPSEY  
EDGAR EVANS  
GERAINT EVANS  
HOWELL GLYNNE  
RAIMUND HERINCX  
JAMES JOHNSTON  
WILLIAM McALPINE  
WALTER MIDGLEY  
KEVIN MILLER  
NIVEN MILLER  
MARION NOWAKOWSKI  
JAMES PEASE  
BRYCHAN POWELL  
JOYCE BARKER  
ANNE BOLLINGER  
SYLVIA FISHER  
BARBARA HOWITT  
PATRICIA KERN  
ADELE LEIGH ~~MARIA KINAS~~  
MARGARET NISBETT  
ELISABETH RUST  
MONICA SINCLAIR  
~~GRACE DARRAVEL~~  
~~PATRICIA KANTLETT~~  
~~RINALD EVANS~~  
~~JOHN HAWK WEL~~

### TALES OF HOFFMANN

(Offenbach)

### TURANDOT

(Puccini)

### MARRIAGE OF FIGARO

(Mozart)

### FAUST

(Gounod)

### LA BOHEME

(Puccini)

### The Radio Éireann Symphony Orchestra

Conductors: Bryan Balkwill, Lieut.-Col. James M. Doyle,  
Warwick Braithwaite, Peter Gellhorn.

Producers: Ande Anderson, John Copley, Christopher  
West.

Chorus Mistress: Julia Gray.

In response to public request, latecomers will not be  
admitted to the auditorium until the interval.

PRICES: DRESS CIRCLE 15/- (Boxes Pro Rata); PARTERRE 10/6;  
GRAND CIRCLE 9/- (Boxes Pro Rata), and 5/-.  
BOOKING OPENS AT THEATRE (10 a.m. to 9 p.m.) ON TUESDAY, 5th NOVEMBER.



# Admirable Singing In "Hoffmann" At Gaiety

BY MARY MacGORIS

"Irish Independent" Music Critic

THERE is only one possible reason for doing Continental opera in English and that is to let the audience know what is going on.

It must be said at once that in "The Tales of Hoffman," which opened the three week's season of Opera in English at the Gaiety Theatre, Dublin, the Dublin Grand Opera Society has done just that—the diction of every member of the cast and of the chorus was so clear as to give such value as they possessed to the words of the Agate translation.

Musically speaking it was perhaps not so entirely successful, mainly due to Peter Gellhorn's stolid and unimaginative handling of the score. In place of the effervescent and sometimes ominous atmosphere which this near-musical-comedy music demands we had heavy rhythm and solid correctness, and while the Radio Eireann Symphony Orchestra played well, it did so as in duty bound.

The principals on the whole were a different matter. The performance began under some difficulty—James Johnston and Anne Bolliger, being suddenly stricken, had to be replaced at short notice by Edgar Evans and Veronica Dunne respectively. This in the event proved no hardship; Mr. Evans, a personable young man, succeeded in evoking some sympathy for the foolish and really excessively glib Hoffman and sang to admiration if without that lyrical tenderness and the occasional thrilling ring which can have its place in the part.

Our Miss Dunne covered herself with glory — she was completely convincing as the loving but song-struck Antonia; she looked absolutely delightful and she gave us consistently the best singing of the night.

Barbara Howitt, too, sang excellently, with warmth, colour and vitality, and carried off the none-too-easy part of Nicklaus with remarkable aplomb. Bruce Dargavel brought authority and, when circumstances permitted it, dignity to the role of the evil magician who bedevils Hoffman to his destruction. His voice has steadied, since we last heard it and showed to particular advantage in Acts II and III—and if at the end of Act I he was more like Fluther in the pub scene than a defrauded scientist that was probably the fault of the production.

## UNWISE TRANSPOSITION

It is extremely questionable whether it is a good idea to produce this opera with the Venetian episode third instead of second—it may be done so at Covent Garden, but that does not necessarily imply that it's the best way to do it.

Dramatically speaking, it is better in the more usual sequence on at least three counts. The transition from the grotesquerie of the doll episode, through the corrupt luxury of the Venetian act, the uneasy peace and sudden tragedy of the Councillor's home is more strikingly effective. Then Hoffman's progress from loving a doll to loving first, a real but evil woman, and finally, one who is good and tender is at least on the stage, more reasonable—it is difficult to accept that having known Antonia, he would be bemused by Giulietta. Finally, the fact that the magician, having gained Hoffman's soul in Venice, prevents him in the next scene from achieving even human happiness, makes, I think, the drama more poignant.

In any case it is strange that the producer, Ande Anderson, did not seem to see that in this performance, after the Antonia act, which was by far the best, the Venetian scene, as easily the worst, would come as a sad anti-climax. There were other curious points about the production—the surely anachronistic cigarettes in the Venetian scene, where the skyline incidentally had a depressing resemblance to a graveyard, and the extraordinarily drastic cutting of the Epilogue which made it so pointless that it would have been better left out altogether.

Nevertheless, given some speeding-up in Act I this is an interesting performance of a fascinating opera and boasts besides some excellent work in the minor parts, notably from Margaret Nisbett as the Doll, Kevin Miller as practically everybody's servant, Monica Sinclair and Brendan Cavanagh.

Peter Gellhorn conducted and kept the tempo severely rigid.

The opera has not been heard for some years, and will probably be a new experience to the younger generation of opera-goers.

OFFENBACH'S four-act "Tales of Hoffman," which was revived by the Dublin Grand Opera Society at the Gaiety Theatre last night, is the composer's most ambitious and significant work, upon which his fame largely rests, although he never lived to see it staged.

Last night's production by Ande Anderson suffered from last-minute change of cast. Edgar Evans took over the part of Hoffman for James Johnston, and Veronica Dunne the part of Antonia for Anne Bolliger.

This unfortunately put a strain on the performance, and upon the general tempo also.

## RAGGED SETS

But generally, the producer did his best to carry the work into the realm of fantasy, its rightful place, and the salient features of each of the five episodes were clearly suggested against some ragged and unattractive acts.

Bruce Dargavel, as Hoffman's *bête noir* was altogether admirable in portrayal of the four aspects of the poet's "evil genius," particularly in the Antonia scene, which in this production precedes the Venetian scene.

Margaret Nisbett made an excellent doll in appearance, gesture and voice in the part of Olympia, making and suggesting the sounds that a mechanical might produce.

## STEALS THE SHOW

Veronica Dunne really steals the show as Antonia. She brought distinction to the part, singing dramatically and with a professional polish that was lacking in many of the others.

Edgar Evans, as Hoffman, gave a careful study, with a certain rumbustiousness, and was vocally adequate.

Barbara Howitt (Nicklaus), Joyce Barker (Giulietta), Niven Miller (Spalanzani) and O. Remy Arthur (Schleiml) also gave good character studies, and the spoken dialogue came over reasonably well. Chorus and orchestra were effective in parts.



IT is possible that Puccini's opera "Turandot" which was produced at the Gaiety Theatre last night by the Dublin Grand Opera Society will be a great success, for it will spare the composer—as far as this new generation of opera-goers is concerned—from being regarded as the old "three opera composer."

Despite its fantastic story and the aura of unreality which prevents the characters in it from having any real human interest, this opera, "Turandot" is a masterpiece, plentifully larded with typical Puccinian tunefulness and offering something to



Sylvia Fisher as Turandot

those who look for more in an operatic score than meets the casual ear.

### SERIOUS WORK

There can be no doubt that in "this really serious work," as the composer calls it, he has made a vigorous attempt to renew himself. The solidity and richness of the choral writing is the most eloquent proof.

True, there are occasional hints of the early, luscious, treacly Puccini as in Calaf's last aria.

No doubt, the composer never

tackled a more revolting subject. The love interest in particular defies credibility. The heroine is unlikeable, she is depicted as pitiless and vindictive, whilst the hero (systematically drawn), with a peculiar insensitiveness makes love to her after witnessing the sufferings of the little slave-girl.

### RIVALS WAGNER

But though these are surely serious drawbacks, there is no greater proof of Puccini's skill than the ease with which he triumphs over such grave difficulties by investing even these at times ungrateful characters with a certain dignity and humanity.

Everything is excellently calculated. Puccini, by the sumptuous splendours of his orchestration, rivals Wagner, for here voice and orchestra become one, and he certainly uses a lot of apparatus.

The main weakness is the final duet, which fate prevented the composer from completing.

### VISUAL APPEAL

Last night's production had visual appeal, and was spacious if a little slow. Peter Gellhorn conducted with enthusiasm, and was obvious determined to raise the roof off the house, more with his orchestral force than with the stage ensembles.

Walter Midgley sang the part of Calaf, and Sylvia Fisher that of Turandot. Both almost succeeded in reaching most of the essentials of their roles.

Elizabeth Rust, made a sympathetic figure as the slave girl Liu, and the Ping-Pong-Pang trio, to which Puccini allots some of his best music, was in the capable hands of Niven Miller, Kevin Miller and B. Powell.

Marian Nowakowski and Brendan Cavanagh filled in admirably.

R.J.

## Walter Midgley Shines In "Turandot"

LAST night's presentation of Puccini's "Turandot" at the Gaiety Theatre was an achievement on the production side by the Dublin Grand Opera Society. This last opera of Puccini, built round a Chinese legend, was given with an opulence and spectacular content well in accord with the story.

Visually it was an entirely satisfying performance even if the principals and chorus did not always measure up to the demands of the score.

There were times when the pace of the production dragged, and a quickening of tempo both in orchestra and voices would have improved considerably the entire presentation.

The Grand Opera Society are, indeed, to be commended in giving an opportunity of seeing and hearing this little known opera to Dubliners who know every bar of "Butterfly," "Tosca" and "La Boheme."

Much of the music in "Turandot" is based on authentic Chinese melodies and rhythms, just as Puccini utilised authentic Japanese folk music in "Madame Butterfly."

### Exotic Flavour

Both operas have this exotic flavour which makes the present production of especial interest as a comparative study and experience.

Amongst the principals the burden of the opera should fall upon Sylvia Fisher as Turandot, but in fact the outstanding performance came from Walter Midgley in the part of Calaf, the unknown prince.

While the soprano was at times unduly forced, Walter Midgley sang with an easy grace and well rounded melodious tenor tone. In the supporting roles the richly resonant bass of Marian Nowakowski as the dethroned king made one wish to hear more of him.

Musically and dramatically an excellent performance was given by Elizabeth Rust as Liu, the slave girl.

The three comedy characters, Ping, Pang and Pong were delightfully played and sung by Niven and Kevin Miller with Brychan Powell. Brendan Cavanagh was admirable as the Emperor. This is certainly an opera not to be missed.



# Historic Production Of "Turandot"

By MARY MacGORIS

"Irish Independent" Music Critic

IT is something of an occasion to see "Turandot" produced at the Gaiety Theatre, Dublin, for, within living memory, this is the first time that Puccini's last opera has been presented in its entirety in this City.

It would seem to be a case of Second-Act-lucky with the D.G.O.S. this season, for, as with "The Tales of Hoffman" on Monday, the second act of "Turandot" is the most successful. This partly is due to the fact that the greatest dramatic tension is to be found in this Act. It is, after all, the scene in which the Prince is asked the three riddles which will lead him to death or bliss. But, one cannot deny that in this production the First Act is slow-moving, while the torture in the Third Act, which should excite pity and horror, is so inept, not to say inefficient, that it can give us no very striking idea of Liu's fortitude—or, which is more important, the depth of her love.

As Turandot, the princess who must have caused a myriad of dynastic wars in various near and middle-Eastern countries on account of her drastic way with princely wooers, Sylvia Fisher seemed to find the very trying music allotted to her a bit of a strain.

She was, however, dramatically effective and her voice, when the tessitura was not too high, had that rich warmth and clarity which seems to be the peculiar property of Antipodean sopranos.

Walter Midgley took the role of Calad, through its paces with the imperturbable confidence of experience. Unmoved and unmoving, he gave every note its value, except the high ones which had a bonus. His vestigial make-up claimed no Tartar blood—one cannot really wonder that he had lost the throne of Tartary—and his frank Saxon countenance and brown hair were curiously ingenuous for the subtle Prince who could guess Turandot's enigmas, watch her cruelty and then win her by love alone.

The really artistic and well-conceived performance was a triple one—from Ping, Pang and Pong. Niven Miller, Kevin Miller and Brychan Powell gave us, as Puccini so cleverly gave them, the sentimentality and cynical practicality of the East, even though the conductor did his best at times to drown them with orchestral tone, their performance was always a delight.

Marian Nowakowski as Timur introduced a welcome note of vocal colour into the proceedings and Brendan Cavanagh had an effective remoteness as the Emperor.

The question now arises, when is

some kind and responsible person going to do something about the chorus? Vocally there is nothing wrong with it, that patient teaching assiduous practice and a certain amount of discipline will not cure. But, otherwise, there are lots of things wrong with it, that a little imagination, care and elbow-grease could easily cure. The members have obviously worked hard at Turandot and their performance is on the whole creditable.

Trouble and probably expense have been lavished on the costumes of the men which are spectacular, but when the Emperor's Guard, or whatever it is, marches in in ancient Chinese garb, with rolled-up trousers, elegant wool socks and stout walking shoes plainly visible from the calf down illusion vanishes at once. The D.G.O.S. often makes heavy demands on our willing suspension of disbelief, demands with which we are always willing to comply, but this sort of thing would break any spell, and as long as it continues, no production, whatever its excellence, will be a complete success.

However, on the principle that three-quarters of a loaf is better than none, let us be grateful that Turandot has at last achieved a Dublin premiere and one which is more or less sumptuously dressed, spectacularly set and adequately sung.

NEARLY every seat was occupied for the Dublin Grand Opera Society's production of Turandot at the Gaiety last evening. Which was a surprising thing, for usually there is no surer way of emptying the house than putting on some unfamiliar opera, even when the name Puccini is attached.

Unfortunately the performance turned out a rather uneven one. Walter Midgley, as the prince in love with Turandot, sang well but confined his acting to a few well-worn gestures and postures. To say that he failed to win my sympathy is to say that he failed to do the

impossible, for the prince is another of Puccini's contemptible lovers who are all passion and no principle. This princely individual allowed a girl who loved him to be tortured for his sake, and then made love to her torturer.

## Exacting music

Sylvia Fisher (Turandot) was not in the best of voice last night and at one point in the cruelly exacting music found her powers deserting her. But she pulled through courageously and gave us some good singing in the love duet.

Niven Miller, Kevin Miller and Brychan Powell made an effective Ping-Pang-Pong trio; Elizabeth Rust was a suitably pathetic Liu and Ronald Evans a good Mandarin.

Marian Nowakowski, whom I don't remember to have seen before in opera, created a favourable impression as the blind and dethroned Tartar King, and Brendan Cavanagh overcame the disadvantage of an unconvincing make-up with his very convincing singing of the aged Emperor.

The only good thing I can say about the chorus is that they kept their faces commendably straight in the enigma scene when the Prince thrice launched out into the opening bars of The Wearing of the Green. In every other respect, let me assure them, they were well down to their usual standards.



## The chorus

I had barely got over the shock of seeing two startlingly contemporary pairs of tan shoes in Ancient China when a soldier appeared with his trousers comfortably tucked into gray woollen socks. And I thought the ladies carried Chinese fortitude to excessive lengths by betraying no sign of discomfort while being vigorously lashed by Woollen Socks's friends with what appeared to be rawhide whips.

The conductor, Peter Gellhorn, seemed more at home with Puccini than with Offenbach, but in such contests as between a tenor and a battery of trombones Mr. Gellhorn's sympathies seemed to lie with the trombones. I know I feel the same way too, but all the same it's not quite fair.

J. O'D.

By MARY MacGORIS

### Irish Independent" Music Critic

"**FAUST**" is a medieval legend set to music which, though French, is still in the mid-Victorian tradition and, as such, one is accustomed to see it produced with all the trappings—the magical translations, the trapdoor leading to the fires of Hell, the feather and scarlet cloak of Mephistopheles and all his necromantic tricks.

The D.G.O.S., presenting it at the Gaiety Theatre, Dublin, gave us a "new look" "Faust" which succeeded as it eventually but certainly did, mainly because of the singing and the music, in spite of the production.

John Copley, possibly abashed by the difficulty of producing the opera adequately with one or two rehearsals, took the line of least resistance. He adopted the functional method; where there were challenges he ignored them.

The tricky business of getting Faust transformed from an aged savant into a young man he solved by the simple expedient of sending him off-stage to remove his cloak and cap. Marguerite's translation from prison to Heaven was effected by the opening of a gate and the subsequent depressing of several light switches.

### CHORUS GROUPINGS

He did, however, infuse a great deal of convincing life into the chorus, whose groupings, occasionally contrived but usually natural,

enough, were very effective. He helped to achieve this in the Kermesse scene by himself taking the part of the premier danseur in the charming ballet otherwise provided by the students of the National Ballet School, a part for which, as a former member of Sadler's Wells, he was well qualified.

Patricia Bartlett gave the most sympathetic and appealing interpretation of Marguerite that we have seen at the Gaiety for some time. Her singing—a little hard in the lower register—is rich and vibrant on top; her phrasing is intelligent and she shows a sense of line.

Marian Nowakowski, shorn of Mephistopheles's traditional garb, wore an elegant and acceptable Cinquecento costume, but he could have done with spangles on his eyes and a more diabolic make-up.

He compensated for this, however, by projecting all the sinister power and sardonic humour of the role by means of his voice and his stiffly graceful gestures.

### RICHLY SUNG

Valentine was richly sung by Ronald Evans. Walter Midgley was adequate as Faust, Margaret Nisbett was vocally inadequate as Siebel and Vera Power-Fardy was a flirtatious and audible Martha.

Lieut.-Col. J. M. Doyle, conducting the Radio Eireann Symphony Orchestra, took the first two acts at a rather deliberate pace, but the last two went with a fine impressive sweep which brought some stirring singing from principals and chorus. The chorus, indeed, much improved in appearance though as yet imperfect, gave us in the scene of Valentine's death a really excellent choral tone.

The sets, especially the Marketplace, were imaginative and attractive, but the lighting was murky and, where used for effects, erratic.

## "Faust" At The Gaiety

FOR the third opera of the season at the Gaiety Theatre, the Dublin Grand Opera Society presented Gounod's "Faust" last night.

It was a performance that had many good points, but which also suffered from a few mistimed exits and entrances, and some rather strange lighting effects. A lot was left to the imagination, particularly in the last act, when the soul of Marguerite is borne away to Heaven and Faust dragged into the underworld by the triumphant Mephistopheles.

The chorus did not sing particularly well, but they certainly disported themselves around the stage in the right manner. There was, too, a sprightly and zestful dance scene by the pupils of the National Ballet School.

### Fine Soprano

In the role of Marguerite was Patricia Bartlett the Australian soprano, now with Sadler's Wells. She gave a very satisfying performance both vocally and histrionically. Her range is impressive, and the manner in which she coloured her many difficult phrases was very satisfying.

Fresh from his previous night's triumph in "Turandot," Walter Midgley, as Faust, gave us fine, colourful and emotional singing, in a role that suited his lyric quality of voice.

Marian Nowakowski was a lukewarm Mephistopheles, with, however, exemplary diction. As Valentine, Ronald Evans enhanced a well studied reading of the part by very artistic singing.

Others in the cast were Margaret Nisbett (Siebel), Patrick J. Tobin (Wagner), and Vera Power-Fardy (Martha).

The conductor was Lieut. Col. J. M. Doyle, who kept a tight rein on the tempi, and successfully co-ordinated the work of the principals, chorus and orchestra.



# 'La Boheme' was a fine production

**P**UCCINI'S "La Boheme," which was staged at the Gaiety Theatre last night by the Dublin Grand Opera Society, is not one of those operas, like "La Traviata," that never fail to make their effect—even in a bad performance.

But last night's performance, conducted by Warwick Braithwaite, will probably come as a revelation to those whose experience has been limited to the routine "bread and butter" treatment usually given to the score, possibly even including our Italian visitors.

The orchestral part, which for most of the time is an accompaniment to what is essentially a singers' opera, was beautifully executed. The playing by the R.E. Orchestra was flexible, with superb attack and skill that let us hear many felicitous details of scoring that are often lost in the general blur of texture reaching us from the pit. Warwick Braithwaite carried everyone on both sides of the footlights with him, especially in the animated second act, which contains much of the best music in the opera, sensitive and imaginative.

## SMOOTH PRODUCTION

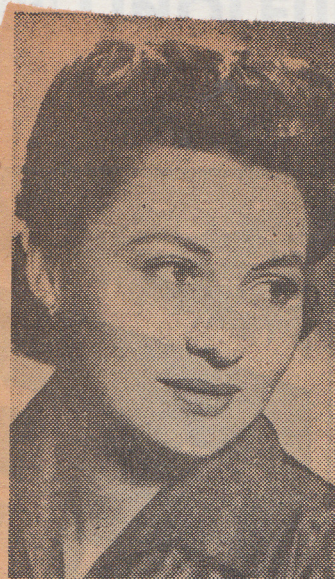
The production, by Christopher West gives all the joys and sorrows, and runs smoothly with clear diction against the usual sets (with a few additions).

William McAlpine, as Rudolph, was possibly more poet than Bohemian, and although he sang effectively he was somewhat lacking in fervour, and inclined to drag. Adele Leigh's Mimi gives visual pleasure, and was all the more moving for the restraint and subtlety of her vocal display. James Pease's Colline is very impressive (vocally), and John Hauxwell, Niven Miller all enter with gusto into the horse-play of the comic scenes, while Brendan Cavanagh's Benoit and Alcindoro are the perfect little cameos expected. Elizabeth Rust as Musetta could be better—in fact, this part could easily steal the show. All round, a good performance, and the best production to date.

R. J.

**T**HE Dublin Grand Opera Society continued their season at the Gaiety Theatre last night with Gounod's "Faust." This popular opera continues to hold the stage apart from its dreary moments, and it might sometime strike the company now to attempt Berlioz's "Damnation of Faust" and give this old work a well-earned rest.

Goethe thought that "Mozart ought to have set Faust to music, and the music should have resembled that of Don Giovanni." What he would have thought of Gounod's attempt will, of course, never be known. This production, by John Copley, sheds no new light, not even on Mephistopheles; darkness still covers the mediaeval scene and "gross darkness the people," which reminded me of the aria in some of the fine singing by Marian Nowakowski as Mephistopheles. He showed devilish ingenuity in avoiding the red spot light, whilst his singing could not be technically criticised (he always made a pleasant sound), the origin of the character he was playing seemed to have eluded him. Where was the fire and brimstone?



Adele Leigh

Walter Midgley's Faust followed up his performance in Turandot with an extremely competent character. How few singers can do two exacting roles on consecutive evenings. As Marguerite, Patricia Bartlett, in spite of some hardness in the lower register in her opening scenes, brought a certain touch of convincing characterisation to the role, particularly in her mezzo-voice singing. She was most effective in the Jewel song, and her final scene, in spite of having to finish behind prison bars.

Ronald Evans' Valentine (superbly sung) died most effectively, and Margaret Nisbett's Siebel relied too much on the edge of the note. Vera Power-Fardy's Martha was commendable. Orchestra and chorus, a smooth and well — under Lt.-Col. J. M. Foyle, gave a smooth and well-integrated account of this much-loved score.

R.J.



## "LA BOHEME"

### AT THE GAIETY

THE Dublin Grand Opera Society last night atoned for their dismal "Faust" by a remarkably good performance of "La Bohème" at the Gaiety Theatre.

First of all, I could not ask for a better Mimi than Adèle Leigh. She has everything the part requires—appearance, acting and really lovely singing. By the time Mimi dies, one can but share Rudolph's broken heart.

Rudolph himself was really well played and sung by William McAlpine; if at times his movements seemed a little affected, this sort of poet probably was. His singing matched Adèle Leigh's and I found their first act scene completely convincing as this well-worn passage so seldom is, especially in this standard old translation.

The other three friends played as a good team and James Pease (as Collin) sang his coat song very affectingly; but both John Hauxwell (Marcel) and Niven Miller (Schaunard) were not clear enough in their diction. I am thoroughly in favour of opera in the vernacular, if it is well done, but it must be understandable.

I was not so pleased with Elizabeth Rust's Musetta, except in the last act. I liked her voice, but her diction was bad and she did not seem to suit the part.

Brendan Cavanagh reverted to normal in both his small parts after his admirable performance in "Turandot"—and he must make himself up properly for elderly parts.

By Dublin standards, Christopher West's production was unusually good, and I very much liked Warwick Braithwaite's conducting. In the first act, indeed, he allowed the brass to get a bit out of hand, but after that there was a good deal of really lovely orchestral playing in a presentation of the opera that I really enjoyed.

C. A.

## Pleasant singing in 'Bohème'

IF you like La Bohème there are enough good things in the D.G.O.S. production at the Gaiety to make a visit enjoyable.

William McAlpine is an excellent Rudolph. He has an easy grace of manner and movement that matches his effortless singing, so that he is as pleasant to watch as to listen to. The Mimi is Adele Leigh, who has pretty looks and a pretty voice and knows how to use both with considerable effect on the more susceptible members of the audience.

I suppose it's ungallant to mention it, but for a person with a weak chest she was really asking for trouble going out in the cold to the Cafe Momus without even pulling her stole up around her shoulders. But then the weather was probably not half as inclement as the bohemians made out because I noticed that in the third act only one and a quarter handfuls of snow came down from the flies.

James Pease made his mark with Colline's song of farewell to his coat in the last act; Niven Miller (Schaunard) was, as usual, prompt and efficient; and Brendan Cavanagh who in voice and acting is remarkably good this season, made a fine job of his two roles, Benoit and Alcindoro.

Elizabeth Rust was a lively Musetta and Gus Madden sang the small part of the Custom House Sergeant with confidence.

I reserve a special salutation for John Hauxwell's Marcel. It was a carefully thought out characterisation, enhanced by some lovely singing.

### The chorus

The chorus were—well, just what we expect, and the R.E. Orchestra improved as the evening went on: that is to say they went from worse to bad.

I cannot fault Christopher West's production except in the matter of the balletic young lady who was made dart out on the stage several times in Act 2 with an intensely worried expression as if wondering where on earth that Swan Lake had gone to.

J. O'D.



## A Delightful "Figaro" At The Gaiety

THE Gaiety was packed in every part last night for Dublin Grand Opera Society's presentation of Mozart's "Marriage of Figaro," and it was a performance that had many delightful moments, one of the most satisfying, indeed, of recent years.

Every part, big and small, was filled admirably and there were no hitches. The conductor, Bryan Balkwill, drew some beautifully crisp playing of the nimble score from the orchestra and maintained perfect cohesion between stage and instrumentalists. At times, perhaps his tempo was a shade too deliberate, and he took Figaro's famous aria at the end of the first act at a pace too slow to enable the singer to give it the liveliness and point it demands.

### "SUBTLE TOUCHES"

The female chorus of village maidens had very little life either in voice or action. These were the only defects that one noted during an evening that provided immense enjoyment; unless one complains of the length of the three intervals and the late hour (almost 11.30) to which the show ran.

The title role was taken by James Pease, whose expressive and flexible voice fitted excellently into the music of the part. The quick wit and natural gaiety of the man—and also, indeed, his innate dignity and integrity—were conveyed in numberless subtle little touches. This was a Figaro for the connoisseur.

The requisite contrast was provided by Geraint Evans, as the dery and philandering Count. Mr Evans sings and acts with the necessary authority and assumes with ease the changing colours of this difficult part, in its sombre and savage jealousy somewhat out of line with the general gaiety of the opera.

## Refreshes interest in Mozart

THE Dublin Grand Opera Society, at the Gaiety last night, refreshed our interest in Mozart with a performance of "The Marriage of Figaro," an opera which has not been heard for some time.

Production by Christopher West adheres to the style and period, with the emphasis on the salient points and possibly a little stressing of the humorous episodes. Mr. West concentrated upon movements that kept the stage alive with the servant peasant side of the battle of wits and was well served by a good cast, notable for their unusually clear diction.

Costumes are perhaps more attractive than the sets, but this does not matter; the glorious music always is allowed the chief say.

### DIVERTING ACTING

The other men among the principals were all well up to expectations. Howell Glynnne gave us some impressive singing and highly diverting acting as the scheming Dr. Bartolo, Kevin Miller was extremely funny as Basilio, Niven Miller stuttered amusingly as Curzio and Martin Dempsey came in with a clearly articulated Antonio.

Among the ladies, Adele Leigh's Susanna was a charming creation complete with all the nods and becks and wreathed smiles of this lovely part, and Anne Bollinger sang the troubled Countess's arias with dignity and pensiveness. Patricia Kern was a sprightly Cherubino with a voice of the quality required for the two famous arias, while Barbara Howitt gave much entertainment with her portrait of the improbable Marcellina.

### IMAGINATIVE DISPLAY

Finally, Margaret Nisbet gave Barbarina charm and personality and sang her little fourth act piece beautifully.

The exquisite concerted pieces were sung consistently with due regard to balance and the dramatic situation.

The staging, imaginative, ingenious and economical, drew much favourable comment. Production was by Christopher West.

Adele Leigh was naturally cast as Susanna, knowing her place in quasi-feudal society and with all the wit and vivaciousness to make her the leading figure in the intrigue. Her singing, too, was excellent and her "Deh vieni, non tarder" quite outstanding.

The pathos and dignity of the Countess were effectively conveyed by Anne Bollinger, and Patricia Kern made a model Cherubino with the required adolescent dignity. Her singing was first rate, particularly her "Voi che Sapete." Barbara Howitt acted superbly as Marcellina and there was also much to admire in Margaret Nisbett's ingenious Barbarina.

The outstanding artist is Geraint Evans, who brings life and vitality to the part of the Count with a fine command of voice and line for Mozart's music. James Pease's Figaro is also right in style, as are Howell Glynnne's Bartolo, Kevin Miller's Basilio and Martin Dempsey's Antonio.

The Radio Eireann Symphony Orchestra under Bryan Balkwill provided many moments of real pleasure and kept the opera moving along smartly. **R.J.**



# DELIGHTFUL "FIGARO" AT THE GAIETY

By MARY MacGORIS

"Irish Independent" Music Critic

ANYONE who misses "The Marriage of Figaro," presented at the Gaiety Theatre by the Dublin Grand Opera Society, will miss the best operatic production we have seen in Dublin for several years and one of the most enjoyable performances of this opera it can be possible to see.

Mozart's "Figaro" is like an inexhaustible jewel-box and every gem of solo or ensemble or situation was given full value in this performance. It was an operatic performance in the best sense, one in which music and action matched and blended; it had moments of tenderness and all the humour which Beaumarchais invented and Mozart translated.

The team-work of the cast was impressive and the recitative was so excellently done by everyone that it sounded as natural as conversation—and this in English.

The finest singing came from Anne Bollinger, exquisite in every way as the Countess. Geraint Evans, vocally and histrionically magnificent as the Count, and Patricia Kern, at once the most convincing and the most delightful Cherubino I have ever seen.

## CHARM AND HUMOUR

Adèle Leigh was an enchanting Susanna and her singing of "Deh, vieni" had a most appealing charm. James Pease, who seemed at times to be using an American-inspired translation, brought out all the humour and insouciance of the lively Figaro.

Marcellina was played with vivacity and style by Barbara Howitt, who sang beautifully whenever she got the chance. She had an admirable pair of supporting plotters in Howell Glynn and Kevin Miller.

Margaret Nisbett was deliciously suited, both in voice and appearance, to Barbarina and Martin Dempsey was an excellent Antonio. Joan Wilson and John Copley danced the third-act fandango with remote dignity and grace.

The stylised sets used against black drapes were designed by Christopher West, who was responsible for this fine production; they were splendidly effective, as were the costumes of the principals, all attractive and some superb. The chorus looked much smarter than usual in costumes which suited the period and made them seem part of the production.

Bryan Balkwill drew from the Radio Eireann Symphony Orchestra playing which, apart from a rather penetrating oboe and a tendency to heaviness in the lower strings, had balance and elegance.